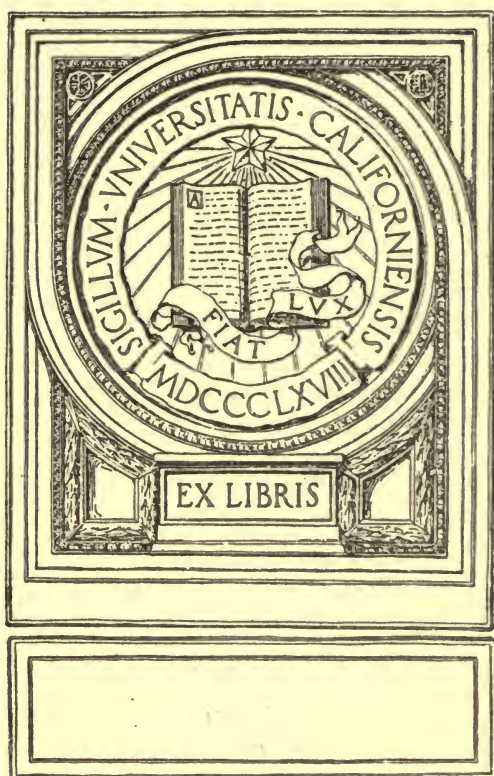

MONARCHS
AND MEN

MAXIMILIAN HARDEN



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AND MEN



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Photograph Ernest H. Mills.

King Edward.

MONARCHS AND MEN

BY

MAXIMILIAN HARDEN

AUTHOR OF "WORD PORTRAITS" ETC.
AND EDITOR OF "ZUKUNFT"

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KING EDWARD

IN the month of January 1842, Frederick William IV made a journey to England. He had, nineteen months before, written with his own hand, not only to Queen Victoria, but to the Prince Consort of Her Most Gracious Majesty, to say that he had ascended the throne of the Hohenzollerns ; he had by this gracious act, and many subsequent indications of courtly respect, won the heart of the young ruler, and had, under the influence of Bunsen and Heinrich von Bülow, shown himself throughout his brief rule an admirer of the British character. Were not the chief continental Powers, Russia and France, vying with each other for England's favour ? Prussia, and the German Alliance in which Frederick William and his ministers saw a Power of the first rank, had to stand well with this much-wooded island-nation. That did not indeed seem difficult, according to Bülow's memoir on the internal condition of Great Britain. Robert Peel, the new Premier, was, on account of his piety, a man after the heart of the Prussian King, and he had no political hostility to Germany. Even Palmerston had never been an enemy of Germany, according to Bülow ; and Lord Aberdeen, his successor, was particularly welcome to the Berlin court, since he was a supporter of Metternich.

This feeling of the Hohenzollerns promised to be of considerable advantage to Britain. Stockmar of Coburg, who had been reared in the school of his countryman, Leopold, and was a power on the Thames at that time, knew on which side to approach the effusive monarch ; at his advice Frederick William was invited to be godfather at the baptism of Prince Albert Edward. Metternich, it is true, warned him of the danger of a Protestant agitation, and the Tsar Nicholas was opposed to the journey, since it might lead to a meeting with the King of Belgium or one of the French princes. Frederick William, however, would not be dissuaded. He felt that he was greatly honoured by the godfather-ship, and was so convinced of the irresistibility of his charm that he sought difficulties rather than avoided them. He met no member of the Orleans family, but saw Leopold of Belgium at Ostend as he crossed, and afterwards visited him at Laeken, in order to obtain influence over him, although he was at that time regarded as a usurper and stealer of the crown by monarchs who boasted their legitimacy. No living mortal could resist his eloquence. By the time he had talked to the Coburger for two hours the relations of Belgium and the Netherlands were in perfect order, and the question of the Belgio-Luxemburg frontier was settled on the lines of the tariff-union.

In London, naturally, he had a pleasant experience. At the baptismal banquet Victoria wore a bracelet containing the portrait of the Prussian king, and was pleased to bestow on her son's god-

father the Order of the Garter. Fervent after-dinner speeches proclaimed the unshakeable friendship of the two leading Protestant Powers. At the opening of Parliament Frederick William, and he alone, sat between the Queen and the Lords, as a near relative of the royal house. At St. Paul's Cathedral he admired the Anglican service ; at the theatre he admired the careful staging of Shakespeare's comedies ; at Newgate he admired the fine humanity of the administration of the prison. He was enchanted with all that he saw and heard ; but he left no deep impression behind him, although he praised the institutions of the island-kingdom in unstinted terms. In the Upper House Lord Brougham expressed a hope that the Prussian would do for his people all that his father had promised, and show that he could take a lesson from the spectacle of freedom in England. Some of the journals—the London Press was not so reticent in 1842 as it now is—jeered at him as a spy, a hypocrite, and a fool. Politicians were not dazed by the brilliance of his rhetoric. The most friendly observers only saw in him, as Treitschke did afterwards, "the greatest of those gifted dilettanti who abound so much in modern civilisation ; in not one of the numerous provinces of intellectual life over which his restless mind has roamed does he show any real power or creativeness, least of all in the political domain."

Nothing came of the journey. The fantastic plans of the guest were politely, but coolly, heard, and Stockmar himself, who had learned the art of

dissimulation at two courts, could hardly conceal his horror when the King told him one day that Belgium (which had been recognised in 1830, at Prussia's request, as a neutral State) must enter the German Alliance. But Frederick William always saw only what flattered his self-esteem, and was firmly convinced that the journey to England had been of material service to Protestantism and Germany. Not for a moment did he think of giving his people the benefit of the hereditary wisdom of England. Victoria and Albert, however, were to learn how deep an impression the visit to London had made on his heart. Cornelius must design a shield for his godson, and it must be executed in silver. In the centre was the head of Christ, underneath it a representation of the Protestant sacraments, on the border the Christian King, in pilgrim's cloak and hat, crossing the sea in a ship guided by an angel and driven by the chained demon of steam, and awaited on the shore of the angels by St. George, Wellington, and the Prince Consort. The portraits of Alexander von Humboldt (with an olive-branch in his hand), Natzmer, and Stolberg were also to be seen on the border of the shield, close to a representation of Christ's entry into Jerusalem. The British courtiers smiled discreetly, and the Whigs and Radicals laughed aloud, at this marvellous symbol, though no doubt of its fineness troubled the King's mind. Once more—he swore it—had a great victory fallen to his statesmanlike and psychological talents.

The light-minded King, who used to call con-

sistency the poorest of all virtues, did not long remain loyal to England. He annoyed the English at the time of the Crimean War—it is true they had treated him rather badly—by his very apparent hope that Russia would win. Yet fourteen years after the journey, in 1856, when the mind of the eloquent monarch was at length, and unhappily too late, properly appreciated (even when he was youthful Regent he had often exclaimed, with flashing eye : “ I must speak, he gives me no rest ”), Herr Otto von Bismarck, at Frankfort, was overcome with anger whenever he spoke of the Anglo-mania of the Prussian court. His opinion of England was, as his opinion generally was in things of which he had not a close knowledge, almost Napoleonic in its injustice. Disraeli seemed to him at that time merely a Jewish dialectician of the rank of Stahl, and the famous hereditary wisdom of England had disappeared for ever since the Reform Bill of 1832, which had extended the suffrage. He did not see that there was merely a slight change in the façade, and the oligarchic structure was maintained under Victoria ; he declared that the “ Bull ” was still powerful, but “ did not know where it was rushing since the ring of oligarchy had been taken out of its nose.” As minister he learned to regret the error of this opinion. Yet there was truth in what he wrote to Gerlach, who had asked his opinion on the “ English marriage ” of Prince Frederick William, which was much disliked in Russia. “ The marriage,” he said, “ may be very good, but the English of it does not please me.

I wish at all events that we had not sought the marriage until England had time to forget the many offensive things that have been said about us in the Press, in Parliament, and especially in diplomacy. A private individual would not have the audacity to press at once for the hand of a daughter in a house where he had been so unworthily treated." This feeling had entered the minds of the best of the Prussians while Frederick William sought the favour of Britain with the effusive ardour of a poor, and often a humble, relative.

The christening-shield, which Peter Cornelius had interrupted his great work on his cartoons to sketch, hung in the boy's room. Sixty years afterwards he received at Westminster the crown of a King and Emperor. The little Albert Edward had not been made pious by the daily sight of the shield. The Coburgs always imagined God in the character of a good man, and the Prince of Wales was a genuine Coburger. His father was Leopold's nephew, and his Guelph mother was a daughter of Louisa of Coburg, who had married the Prince von Leiningen. The handsome Prince Consort, who seems to have been more of a tutor than a father, did not succeed in stamping his own character on his son. He was too punctiliously correct: too far removed from old English joviality. In the parental houses decent kisses were exchanged at the proper times, State affairs received prompt attention, and babies made their appearance with the punctuality of Bills from Westminster. For this becoming middle-class exist-

ence Victoria's eldest son had not a drop of blood in his veins. He wanted to gratify the pleasant longings of his crown-princely nature, pose as an *arbiter elegantiarum* in the world of fashion, and enjoy to the full the adventurous pleasures which have become a British dauphin since the merry days of Hal. St. George, St. Wellington, and St. Albert could not lead him to brew sadness. Tutorship for the business of ruling? Nonsense. Constitutional cant rules, and a man with no gifts can quickly teach the shadow of a King to play. He would amuse himself; he liked roulette and cards, dry champagne and amiable ladies. We heard him live: heard of his relations with shady speculators who, one must suppose, could only have climbed to such a height by a ladder of gold. Hirsch, who had been expelled from the Paris Jockey Club (and had bought the Club-house and left the Jockeys without a roof, to avenge himself for the black balls), was so frequently entertained by him that Labouchere could write that no dinner was ever given at Marlborough House without *Parfait au Hirsch*.

This breezy life lasted for decades, and even had its echoes in courts of justice. Generally, Paris or Monte Carlo was the theatre. Here the Prince des Galles was in his element; here he settled the fashion, enjoyed himself to distraction, and, when he felt disposed, penetrated the slimiest caverns. He was not pious or ascetic; and at least he was no hypocrite. Is it easy, indeed, to be Crown Prince so long? Is it easy to wait idly in the house of

Victoria, who kept her son out of State affairs, for the day, perhaps distant day, which will summon one to creative work? Gradually even this king of fashion, whose vitality had outlived so many storms, became weary: so inert and morose that he would not take the trouble to extract the kernel from the finest pleasure-haunts of Europe. Why make an effort? Mamma will survive all of us—*rien ne va plus*. When the cushions are removed, desire awakens in the grove of his faculties. His pursuit of pleasure had not seriously injured his vocation; it was the lack of money that at length, when his mother's end approached, showed him in a bad light. Wherever he appeared, angry voices protested that he had speculated in gold-mines, disturbed the waters of the Vaal with Rhodes, Milner, and Beit, taken part in the preparations for the Jameson raid, and used his influence to frustrate the inquiry into it. Whether these things were true or false, it was unpleasant to ascend, with the burden of such charges, the throne of an Empire that failed to subdue an obstinate race of peasants. The stout prince was not dismayed by these rumours; he was more irritated by the jeer that he had been "made in Germany." That might be dangerous. Away with his father's name, therefore, since it recalled the small princes of Germany. Let it be Edward—a name that suggests to the Briton the king of the time of the barons' wars, who organised the Government, sustained Magna Carta, and brought the principality of Wales under the law of England. The prince was anointed at the altar

under the name of Edward VII. And an attack of appendicitis won for him some affection in sympathetic hearts.

Over his cradle hung the devout shield of his Berlin godfather. In the coronation-throne, on which King Edward awaited the clergy, was the stone on which Jacob had rested his head when he saw the ladder reaching up to heaven. Pious sentiment might feel that the hand of the Lord was stretched in blessing over a life that was girt about with such relics. Critical folk might say that intercourse with financiers had taught the Crown Prince the art of doing business. It did not matter. The man of pleasure became a good king. In the first year of his reign he seemed to live entirely in the venerable pomp of the mediæval court-ceremonies ; he sat in his palace, studied works on costume, and looked up the old chronicles of the court for opportunities of fresh display. The second year witnessed the subjection of the Boer Republic, the most valuable success that had fallen to the British Empire since the taking of India. After that Edward looked after his country as a great merchant cares for his firm ; he sought and secured alliances that promised advantage, exploited the weaknesses or follies of his contemporaries, and dissolved engagements from which no more was to be expected.

Many Englishmen found that he ruled too much, followed a personal policy that closely approached absolutism, and needed a Junius to tell him that the English Constitution only protects a king as

long as he does not infringe its spirit. Every Coburger incurred this risk, but it was early seen that Edward's fingers held the reins carefully. Had not the old Queen quietly spun her threads over Europe, and, whether Beaconsfield, Salisbury, or Gladstone was her minister, exerted more political influence than innocent people on the Continent imagined? England did not mind because she profited by it, and, in spite of the legend that in Great Britain Magna Carta is stronger than the strongest man, she will not mind as long as the prosperity of the Empire is not hurt. Under Edward the balance was as good as in the most profitable years of the nation's business. Egypt and South Africa were secured; Italy was in tow; a favourable treaty concluded with Portugal; the growing Power in Asia in alliance; the Newfoundland trouble settled; the Colonies showing their loyalty and willingness to make sacrifices in the Boer War; Russia weakened for a generation without the drawing of an English sword; nothing to fear for India; Germany isolated in Europe—the ghost of the Triple Alliance only frightens children—and doomed to years of struggle in Africa by the side of English settlements which enjoyed a profound peace, and regarded with distrust in Eastern Asia on account of the expedition and the lease-treaty. More important still, for the time being, was the *entente cordiale* with France, which, as soon as England felt it to be advantageous, might lead to an understanding with Russia. How far was all this from the time when the crowd cheered Krüger on the boulevards, and the aged Queen and

the poor Tommy were reviled in every *café* on Montmartre ?

In the year 1905 French and English sailors fraternised at Portsmouth, and in the City the traveller might read the motto, "Gloire à la France," decorated with garlands and tricolour flags. Business was proceeding on the finest principles of modern industry : quietly, after careful arrangement, taking shrewd advantage of the defects of others, without haste or impatience, never missing an opportunity by delay—that is the way to strengthen a business and excite in competitors the desire for a pool, a community of interests, an alliance. Edward had learned a good deal in Paris, New York, London, and Monte Carlo that more correct princes had never learned. "It is in vain for us," says Goethe, "to try to depict the character of a man ; rather let us describe his actions, and we shall have some idea of his character." Edward's actions bear witness for him.

With Germany he certainly desired to live in peace. Son of a Saxon Prince, godson of a King and brother-in-law of a Crown Prince of Prussia, who would one day mount the throne of the German Emperors, why should he quarrel ? The Germans are nice people. The higher nobility of Berlin do not take it amiss if the Crown Princess pays the debts incurred by her brother at court-balls. Nephew William is particularly amiable and respectful. He is delighted when he is not beaten at Cowes, receives the coat of an admiral, or reviews the British Fleet for an hour in the Piræus under the flag of the chief

of the squadron. It is true that his impetuous message stimulated the Boers to try the chances of war, but he soon bitterly regretted his blunder and did everything in his power to appease England. He is still a little impulsive and restlessly active, and would show that he is at home in every department of human activity, can ride in any saddle, and can quickly disarm the reluctant. That is youthful Coburg-blood: time will make him more tranquil. In fine, England needs the Germans; if things ever come to a serious pass, they can cover England's exposed flank. That was the idea. How came it about, then, that as early as the fourth year of Edward's reign the Navy officials at Berlin and London were ordered to prepare the forces for an impending war between Germany and Great Britain?

The hope of removing a serious competitor by means of battleships did certainly not occur to Edward's mercantile mind very lightly. Though the opportunity was so favourable, no Englishman ventured to dream of it. Russia was without a fleet, without any means of giving effective aid to the German Empire against England—without the internal strength that was needed for an attack on the Indian frontier, protected as it was by Kitchener's genius for military technics. France, the second strongest Power on the sea, was friendly with the island-nation, and certainly bound by treaty to intervene in case of a war between England and Germany. In numbers and in the quality of the fighting units the English Fleet was then so superior to ours that we dare not risk a conflict, even if we

knew that our Colonies were better protected. But a nation of sixty-three million men, exceptionally gifted for purposes of industry and trade, industrious, occupying a rich soil, and working for low wages, is in the end not made harmless by sinking or blowing up a few of its ships. Any great merchant can see that ; none would invest his money in so short-sighted a speculation. Competition must be borne ; it is only the constant disturbance of business that is intolerable. And Edward discovered that Germany was interfering with his business. Germany ? In reality it was the German Emperor. People of the same family rarely criticise each other with the equanimity of the cool judge. The uncle was angry with the nephew, and the nephew with the uncle of the Coburgers ; and the words that flew from side to side of the Channel did not sound very temperate to those who heard them. What does our William want, then ? What are these plans he has in the depths of his heart ? He cannot grudge us our coming to an understanding with France in favourable circumstances, since he would like to do the same himself. Yet from that time—since the *entente cordiale* was made public—he has spoken badly of us, although we did not spare garlands and wreaths in his honour. New departure ? Is he again thinking of the East ? Is our unamiable relative seeking allies against us in the obscurity of the Mohammedan world, at Washington, or in the Scandinavian kingdoms ? Is France to be overpowered by arms, or compelled by German threats to turn her back on us ? No one knows ; we get

a different version from every embassy. Not a day passes without a surprise. Yesterday it was an almost bellicose speech ; to-day an unexpected visit ; to-morrow it may be a declaration of peace. *Lui, toujours lui.* It gets on our nerves. As yet there is no conclusion to his dialectical exercises, no action corresponding to his words ; yet how can we wait quietly for it ? The man who cannot calculate how the market will look to-morrow, what goods will be offered or wanted, will not do profitable business. Germany wants fertile territory and is building ships to seize it—probably from us—with the help of the Americans, French, or Russians. We can understand these possibilities ; but we do not like new things constantly turning up, we do not want all our foresight paralysed by the fear of changes of weather, we do not want to be upset at every moment by improvisations which shatter our plans on the walls of facts. Was it not a Prussian officer who, nearly a hundred years ago, rose with a battle-cry against the despotism of the Corsican rather than submit to endless frights ? That is much the way in which Edward spoke and wrote ; and, unfortunately, he found a hearing in every part of the earth, and was regarded everywhere as the most dangerous enemy of Germany. Was he ? Or was it the Emperor, rather than the Empire, that irritated him, and the uncle who irritated the nephew ?

On March 11, 1888, two days after the death of his father, the Emperor Frederick returned from Italy. He had declared that he would not assume

the crown if the growth in his larynx proved to be cancer. But the cancer-diagnosis of the German physicians, Bergmann, Gerhardt, Schrötter, Schmidt, Leuthold, and Landgraf, is still in the archives of the royal house; Virchow did not find malignant disease in the piece of tissue sent to him for examination; and the English physician, Sir Morell Mackenzie, promised relief. The idea of excluding the patient from the succession to the throne had never even remotely occurred to the Imperial Chancellor, and, since even a man with an incurable ailment should take the crown according to the law of the house, could not have been carried out even by the strongest man. Three years before the Crown Prince Frederick had come to an understanding with Bismarck at Potsdam; had told him that he would not suffer British interference in the affairs of the State and would not bow to the yoke of a parliamentary ascendancy either in the Empire or in Prussia. "In these circumstances," says Bismarck (who suffered a good deal in 1864 and 1870 from the political consequences of many a family-letter sent to London), "I am ready to remain in office after the death of my old master." Frederick embraced and kissed the prince, who went to meet him on his return with the Prussian ministers, at Leipsic Station, and, in a manuscript letter of March 12, called him the loyal and courageous adviser who had guaranteed the successful prosecution of the royal and imperial policy.

Eleven days afterwards the conflict begins. The Empress Victoria had secretly resolved to marry

her second daughter to Prince Alexander of Battenberg, and, without informing the Chancellor, she had chosen the day after Easter for the betrothal. The telegram summoning the prince from Darmstadt to Berlin was already written. General Adjutant von Winterfeldt, to whom it was given on the Sunday evening to forward, has a misgiving and places it before the Chancellor as a matter of political importance. Bismarck had already defeated this design, and he now assails it for the second time. The telegram is not sent. Frederick asks Bismarck to write his objections on a slip of paper, and it is done the same day. The Tsar hates Prince Alexander; if the man who was expelled from Bulgaria became the son-in-law of the German Emperor, possibly the Bulgarian opponents of Russia would at once summon him back, and the German Empire would then be involved by a personal interest in the unhealthy climate of the Balkans, and this was inconsistent with their decision to keep out of Eastern questions. The marshal's staff which had been thrown over the walls of a hostile fortress would have to be recovered at any price; the daughter of the German Emperor, married to an enemy of the Tsar, would have to be protected in any circumstances. No conscientious statesman could run such a risk.

The Emperor sees this. Sir Edward Malet, the English Ambassador, writes to the Queen that the proposal makes bad blood in Germany, and the feeling that the Queen favours it will do harm to Anglo-German relations. The shrewdest of the

three Victorias first dissuades her daughter in a clever letter, then comes from Florence to the Charlottenburg palace and gracefully agrees with Bismarck. Tears flow from the eyes of the other two Victorias. Love's labour lost. Grand Duke Frederick of Baden intervenes, as he cannot yet agree, under a dying Emperor, with his sister-in-law's opinion that it would not be a misfortune if Bismarck resigned. And as the Chancellor exerts his old charm and promises to meet in full the financial wishes of the Empress, they are "enchanted with each other," after a long conversation. The visible sign of this peace is the admission of Herbert to the Ministry. There remains, however, in the woman's mind the memory of a humiliation, which Frederick witnessed, and which could not be concealed from the chief officials of the court. Soon afterwards she complains of a "set" (against her, her mother and daughter, and her country) which Bismarck will not crush, although he could; because it suits his purpose.

At midday on June 15, the purple standard that has floated for two months over the dome of the Potsdam Palace of Friedrichskron is lowered, under a burning sun. The Emperor is dead. The house of the dead is surrounded. Cavalry and infantry seem to spring from the ground, and all the doors are watched, at the imperial command. Not a slip of paper must leave the palace. Under the midday sun the English physician speaks to the Emperor and the Chancellor. In the cold tones of one who is not deeply moved he replies: "I

was summoned for political purposes, not as a physician ; I promised to keep the patient alive until he became Emperor and left his family properly situated ; I have done it." The Emperor, however, wishes to prove that the diagnosis of the German physicians was right, and orders a dissection of the body ; insists on it, in spite of the entreaties of the mother, who shrinks from the idea of a mutilation of the corpse. Mackenzie has to hasten his departure. Victoria is helpless ; she is without hope, and is surrounded by distrust. She has always, like the Austrian at Paris, been aloof from the feelings of the people, and been proudly conscious of her British birth. As if she intended to smuggle national property over the frontier, she is requested to part with no letters or other documents. She unburdens her overflowing heart to her brother, who comes to the funeral. On June 22, Chlodwig Hohenlohe notes as her words : " Herbert Bismarck had the impudence to tell the Prince of Wales that an Emperor who cannot discuss has no right to reign. The Prince said that, if it were not out of regard for the good relations between England and Germany, he would have put him out of the door." Albert Edward himself is more restrained, but is " indignant at the grossness of the Bismarck family." And the last line of the dirge in the mouth of each is : " The young Emperor is entirely in Bismarck's hands." It is true that this belief soon weakens. Victoria already foresees the severance ; when the retiring Chancellor bids her good-bye, she speaks so bitterly of her eldest son that the " good hater "

quoted her words (and a letter of Frederick's belonging to the ninety days' reign) for years as a proof of the correctness of his own judgment. From that time there seemed to be peace between the two ; they never openly quarrelled afterwards.

Albert Edward did not forget the Potsdam episode. He had frequently been annoyed before this by the people of Berlin. He was always regarded as half-Parisian and somewhat depreciated as an assiduous pleasure-seeker who always confided the chief things of interest in the family-letters to his friends on the Seine. The little Albert Edward, Prince of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Duke of Saxony and Cornwall, Prince of Wales, and Earl of Chester, whose little head was protected at baptism by Wellington with the State sword, had, it is true, received a symbolic silver shield as a gift from his godfather Frederick William of Prussia, but Louis Philippe had soon afterwards brought him a gun. That does not last long, however, and on his third birthday his good uncle sends him one made of better wood. The shield hangs unnoticed on the wall, but the child asks every day, "Where is my gun?" When he grows up, he is delighted to receive the grand cross of the Andreas Order from Nicholas Pavlovitch, but he remains until his last years grateful to the Frenchman who put the first gun in his plump fingers. Paris was a second home to him. "The idea that Paris, although it is fortified and was the strongest bulwark of the enemy, ought not to be attacked like any other fortress, reached us in the camp from

England by way of Berlin, with the phrase ' Mecca of civilisation ' and other specimens of the cant of public opinion in England and applications of humane sentiments which England expected all other Powers to respect, but did not always respect herself in dealing with her enemies." This passage in Bismarck's book is aimed at Victoria's brother.

A Briton born in 1841, at the time of the Anglo-minia in Prussia, could not easily reconcile himself to the idea of a German Empire: still less could he give up the idea that the supreme ambition of such an Empire must be to become the enemy of Great Britain on the Continent. Under William and Bismarck this ambition could not be realised, nor was it necessary. Is this great Power a definitive thing? In the year 1887, Prince Bertie said to Ernest of Coburg that, as long as Alsace and Lorraine remained German, it was foolish to speak of assured peace. In the same year Alexander III brings from Copenhagen to Berlin documents which go to prove that the German policy has, in spite of all official and unofficial assurances, supported Russia's enemies in Bulgaria. Herr Jules Hansen, a Dane, who plays the spy on a large scale for France, has given them to the Princess Waldemar of Denmark, who shows them to the Tsar. She is an Orleans, daughter of the Duc de Chartres, and very friendly with her brother-in-law at London. Bismarck declares that the documents are forged, and the distrustful Alexander seems to believe him. But he afterwards says in the dining-room of his ambassador, Count Paul Schuvalov: " Bismarck

says that they have forged the documents in order to bring about a quarrel between us, but I do not believe him. He is too clever for me." Two years afterwards he still refuses to believe. Princess Waldemar has told him, again at Copenhagen, that Bismarck is done for. In answer to a direct question the Chancellor replies that he believes himself to be in full possession of the Emperor's confidence. The Frenchwoman was well served, and it is again said in Wilhelmstrasse: "That must have come from Sandringham." Bismarck falls, the German-Russian treaty, which pledges Russia to neutrality in the event of a French attack (a treaty which was necessitated by people of the type of the princess), is not renewed by Caprivi, on the advice of Holstein and with the unanimous agreement of the Foreign Office, Ribot makes inquiries at St. Petersburg whether the time (foreseen by Nicholas I) has not now come for a solid alliance, and Admiral Gervais, with the French fleet, is welcomed by the Tsar at Cronstadt with great ceremony. The familiar intercourse between the Hohenzollerns and the Holstein-Gottorps is almost entirely suspended. Isolation from Russia can only mean an intimate approach to England. Is the hope that was buried with Fritz rising again from the grave?

It almost seems so. When Prince George of England (the present King) receives the robe and order of a Knight of the Black Eagle, William II toasts the aged Queen and her house in the White Room of the imperial palace. Dressed in the costume of a British Admiral, he recalls the brotherhood in

arms at Waterloo, and expresses a hope that the co-operation of the English fleet and the German army will secure peace for the world. (Moltke whispers to his neighbour : " A political song ! A mere song ! I hope the Press does not get hold of it.") Albert Edward is radiant as he sits at the table. The trouble over the manœuvres at Narva is followed by the Zanzibar Treaty, which is useful to British interests. Everything is going beautifully. It is true that story-tellers carry all kinds of court-chatter, old and new, backward and forward across the Channel. There is talk of a kind of life that ill befits a future king. That causes a certain amount of trouble for a time, but it soon passes. If Germany's policy is good, the brother must not espouse the sister's anger.

In the summer of 1895, William says, on board the English flag-ship *Royal Sovereign* : " I can assure you that one of the best days of my life was that in which I inspected the Mediterranean fleet, embarked on the *Dreadnought*, and saw my flag hoisted for the first time. But I am not only an Admiral of your fleet ; I am also a grandson of the mighty Queen of England." He ended with a call for three cheers for the British fleet. Six months afterwards, displeased with Salisbury's stiff attitude, he comes to the Chancellor's house with a military escort, and says that something must be done at once for the Boers, who are about to fall under the British forces. The outcome of a compromise with Hohenlohe and Marschall is the telegram to the Transvaal President, Paul Krüger. The British

lion roars angrily. What the Prince of Wales thinks of it can easily be imagined, when we reflect that the "disturbers of the peace" referred to in the telegram are Rhodes, Jameson, Milner, and Beit, the most devoted friends of the Crown Prince. The old song breaks out again, and Paris and St. Petersburg at once speak of the severance of uncle and nephew as a certainty. One more attempt at reconciliation is made. After Kitchener's victory in the Sudan the Breton wolves howl angrily in France, the aged Queen is insulted day after day in a hundred journals, and even the Prince of Wales, the "born Parisian," has to avoid the atmosphere of Lutetia for a time. Nothing is to be done with France for the time being, and Russia is an uncertain factor. . . . Why not try again at Berlin? William is certainly anxious to win back the British affection which he has lost through his telegram to Krüger. Chamberlain suggests, at Leicester, a Triple Alliance that shall include "the two great branches of the Anglo-Saxon race" together with Germany. If people agree at Berlin, England's strategical position will be improved and there will be a chance of a profitable deal with St. Petersburg and Paris. They remain cool. They do not even welcome Chamberlain's plan when it is revived after the death of the Queen, and there is again talk of uniting the three Teutonic nations. And Edward is now King.

He reminds his nephew, who again wears the uniform of a British Admiral, of his promise of combining the German army and the English fleet in the interest of peace. But he reflects: "The

Emperor who is so zealous for the Bagdad Railway, the overland route to India, as if it were an imperial undertaking, who is hurriedly building warships and trying to enlarge his prestige in the world of Islam, is not our man." He broods over the possibility of pressing into the service of the nation the personal antipathy which he has brought with him to the throne. William speaks of a greater Germany, of his imperial right to have a voice in every great affair on earth, of a (peaceful) domination of the world by the Hohenzollerns, and of Neptune's trident, which properly belongs to him; in the language of the flag-signals he calls himself the Admiral of the Atlantic Ocean. Edward remains calm. He has not been educated as a Dalai Lama; he has lived to know the cares of age, has had dealings with Hirsch, and the diamond-king Rhodes, and Rothschild, and Cassel, and has, as the friend of shrewd business men, learned what life is. Such an experience lifts him above a dozen other monarchs. In the province of trade the sceptic is always far superior to the most gifted sentimentalist. Edward first makes his position comfortable. He amply satisfies the desire for parade which has been starved during his mother's widowhood, and, behind thick curtains, he takes every opportunity to make new friendships and strengthen old ones. Wherever he appears every thoughtful man says: "The man on this throne is the greatest modern business man on a large scale (greater than Louis Napoleon and Leopold II of Belgium). He never makes threatening speeches; he never says what he is going to

do ; he does not want applause, but results ; and he is always ready, like every prudent heir to a business that has been conducted on old-fashioned lines, to pass from apparent to real trade. He will not rob his customers or conceal his scales, or urge the continental Powers to work for His Most Gracious Majesty without reward. The British firm which he represents will pay promptly ; it can do so. It has no need to cry out its goods on every market, or to attract customers, like a small shopkeeper. The work of large modern business-houses has its laws, and even the wealthiest cannot transgress them with impunity. Business is business. The man who wants to isolate a great Power with four million bayonets at its command must pay something for it." Edward says to everybody who cares to listen : " My dear nephew is a remarkably gifted man, but unfortunately unreliable ; if we do not all join in opposing his designs, he will set poor Europe on fire one of these days. I have tried everything that family-friendship enables me to do, but in vain. What do I want ? To maintain peace, to protect civilisation from the horrors of war. Nothing more. Whoever is for prosperity and peace can deal with me. Any innocent man who is threatened can count on my sympathy." Everything turned to his profit. When the Anglo-Russian Treaty became a reality, the old King could say with a chuckle, as he might have done in boyhood : " From Russia I received the cross, from France a weapon. Two very good implements for business. They must serve me."

Did the uncle believe what he said about his nephew? Was he ever disposed to fly to arms? No. He was no soldier and no sailor; neither a blind assailant nor a vain seeker of fame. He was a royal merchant with a shrewd, often majestic intelligence, a thorough knowledge of men, and an inborn amiability. With his German blood and his Parisian manners he was sufficiently removed from his countrymen to (a thing which the Dutchman, Louis Napoleon, was never sufficiently Frenchified to do) exert a gentle stimulating influence on them, yet be one of themselves in his chief features. He believed that he knew his nephew, as one knows his own flesh and blood, as one knows the man whom one has seen grow up and as to whose character one has read hundreds of family-letters. King Edward swore that William II would never go to war; he was anxious to live in the memories of men as an upholder of peace. He said that to his most intimate friends; others he led astray with the fear of war. He had read William's letters to the two Victorias and the Princess Waldemar, who had privately heard the severe strictures of the Master of the Court, Count Seckendorff (whose correspondence will not be published); and he adhered to the diagnosis, "Active, but will do nothing." Relying on this, he acted after the Dogger Bank affair as if the North Sea were to be dyed at once with German blood; he twice offered armed assistance to France, although he knew that the English guns were antiquated and that not a single Tommy Atkins would return alive from Schleswig-Holstein; he urged the

French at Algeciras, through his confidential agent, Sir Donald Mackenzie-Wallace, not to abate a single inch of their pretensions. For years he maintained this view, and pursued his personal policy as if it were sport. He took a right royal pleasure in the effect of his bluff and paralysed German diplomacy in its most important negotiations by an artful wink, which meant: "Don't be intimidated; there is no intention whatever to appeal to the last resort of peoples and kings behind all his high-sounding words; my nephew, whom I know to the marrow of his bones, will not go to war."

Even in the year of the Austrian Balkan annexation he still used this language. Then came the evening in March when Russia's military plenipotentiary heard at Vienna that mobilisation was arranged in case of need, and the assistance of Germany unequivocally promised for the day which should see Russia the companion in arms of Servia. The hour came when the Minister Isvolskij, warned by the Vienna officer, begged Count Pourtalès to arrange a conciliatory intervention at Berlin. Edward would not believe it, but had to yield to a second and third confirmation of the report. Almost on the same day he gave up as lost his most personal policy. Germany is very strong when it remembers that every one of Fritz's bronze cannons bore the inscription, "*Ultima regis ratio.*" Who, after the collapse of the military party in France, after Mukden and Tsushima, will care to challenge, or even to tickle, an Empire that can put four million good men in the field, and, when its honour is at

stake, will do so? No reasonably prudent gambler puts large sums on zero. There is nothing tangible to offer for the moment to partners who are not satisfied. If England allowed Turkey, in the throes of its agitation for reform, to have its territory or its right over the Straits reduced, it would have the Mohammedan fanatics at its throat in India. Their breath is not very pleasant, as things are. And the chief point is that the opponent on whose nerves the King has played has thrown up his cards. The nephew has learned by painful experience that the crowned representative of a nation cannot be its visible and responsible leader. From that time the King thought only of peace.

Edward VII, son of the Coburger, grandson of a Saxon princess, was never an enemy of Germany. As a Briton he knew that England must not abandon the command of the sea and the predominant position in Islamic countries, if it does not wish to see the roots of its power destroyed. As the patron of Sir John Fisher he knew the opinion of English naval experts: "Dreadnoughts alone, not the ships of yesterday, will decide any future war, and Germany may soon be devilishly near us in Dreadnought-strength." As a business man he said to himself that the sixty-three million Germans would not quietly submit to the destruction of their fleet and the loss of their Colonies, and that Great Britain, the market and clearing-house of the inhabited earth, could not sustain a century of constant menace of war even after a great victory. He desired, therefore, an understanding as to the extent

of naval armaments instead of war. The enemy of his nephew? Possibly the two temperaments, which, as long as the younger man was impetuous, could not live in the same house, might some day have come to an agreement. When the uncle was as old as the nephew now is, people heard a good deal about his irregularities but never heard a serious word from his mouth about grave political issues, and could not see the least indication that he was growing to be a statesman with a clear head for facts and a very sure vision. How would the necrology have read if Edward had died at fifty, as son of the living Queen?

The enemy of his nephew? After the dark days of November 1908, Edward, only half humorously, had spoken of himself as the best friend and teacher of the younger man. The pedagogical devices with which he had treated him for two years had assuredly not been gentle: not those of a tender uncle. But that he had an influence on his nephew cannot be denied. An impetuous temper, he might reflect, is only healed by hard experience.

Chlodwig Hohenlohe described the Prince of Wales in his nineteenth year as a "very well brought up youth, somewhat intimidated by his father." The father, after, with a readiness that saddened good people in Germany, divesting himself of his nationality in the open market and feeding the British lion with flattery, had acquired political power; though he never became a favourite of the people in spite of all his efforts.

There was never any intimacy between father

and son. It was also a consequence of the system of education which the German pedant brought to Windsor that mamma, who was always liberal to her Battenberg relatives, never gave a single guinea to help her eldest son out of his financial difficulties. The Prince of Wales, with his income of about £100,000, is much better off than other Crown Princes, but that is, naturally, not enough for one who likes to play for high stakes. Why should he not enjoy life as long as his lamp burned? He has sound English common sense, is never lacking in tact, knows exactly when he has to yield, and is uncommonly amiable. Hardly any one regarded him as an important person, or as a farseeing statesman. Even after his coronation one had not to praise him too warmly among princes, or one might provoke an ironical smile. "An old player who, because he can play no longer, does not find it easy to fill up his leisure. No other passion. Since he can no longer enjoy sport and fun, which are unseemly for one on the throne, diplomacy has to compensate him for the pleasures of his livelier years. He has no political programme whatever. His nephew has annoyed him by scornful references to stories of women and cards, which very soon crossed the Channel, and irritated him by his Olympian manner. He will pay for it. When that has been done, Edward will return to the comfortable life of a man of taste." That was the general opinion down to 1905, but since that date it has been held only by imperfectly informed or prejudiced people. The King who promised the Ambassador,

Paul Cambon, his support in every danger and sent Sir Donald Mackenzie-Wallace as his confidential agent (and instructor of Nicholson) to Algeciras, who mediated shrewdly and quietly between Tokio and St. Petersburg and Tokio and Washington, earned the title of statesman even from the most reluctant observer.

Had he no programme ? When a German Emperor, dazed with the magic of Rome, reached Milan, John of Salisbury, the French-trained schoolman and secretary of the Chancellor Beckett, asked : “ *Quis Teutonicos constituit iudices nationum ?* ” Germany is not to judge the world, not—as William desired—to have a voice in every decision, certainly not to have a hegemony on the Continent of Europe. That was Edward’s programme. For that he sought and found adherents. Any man who represents him as a *routier* of great experience and valuable knowledge of men, and refuses him a creative mind, underestimates the King. The most important developments of recent British policy—the treaties with Japan and with the French Republic—were his work. In order to accomplish them he had skilfully to overcome the prejudices of his people : the racial pride of the white man, which turns in disdain from the coloured man, and the heavy-blooded seriousness of the Anglo-Saxon, which so long regarded the Frenchman only as a useful dress-maker and amusing talker. He succeeded. The roots of our power, he said to his intimates, are threatened. If you wish to protect them—to secure the supremacy of our commerce, the predominance

of our fleet, and our ascendancy in Islamic countries—you must reconcile yourselves to the inevitable and seek alliance with the nations you have been wont to look down upon. California, the Ameer province, Tongking, and Madagascar are threatened by the Japanese ; and the one who has France to-day can have Russia to-morrow. Are you going to wait until they are both captured by our deadly enemy ? No. Their anxiety to be independent of the favour of Germany drives them into alliance with the men of Nippon and Lutetia.

In this way Edward's Anti-German Trust came into being. There was a gap in the south-east of Europe, a weak spot in the west. Austria-Hungary would not yet sever itself from Germany : France did not want to be exposed to the first fire of the German guns. That was the care of his last years. Austria was to be intimidated by the anger that accumulated in the month of the annexation and forced out of its dangerous connection. Then the royal peacemaker could reconcile the French with the Germans, at first without disturbing the Frankfort Peace. How would it be to find compensation in Anatolia for the loss of prestige in connection with Morocco ? Then things are unsettled again in south-eastern Europe before the White Tsar can reach the Bosphorus again with his forces. To give the Germans a slice of Anatolia is the best means to rob William's Empire, in the eyes of the Mohammedans, of its aureole of disinterested friendship, to embroil the three Empires, and to bind Britain and Russia more closely in a common ambi-

tion. When France is reconciled, moreover, Germany cannot take from it the cost of the naval battles it loses.

It was a most skilfully devised plan, calculated to meet the temperament and nerves of a particular player. But this man suddenly pushes his chair from the table. In November 1908, William resolves to conduct no longer the business of his Empire. One has now to reckon with sixty-three million Germans. They will take to the sword, if there is no alternative, even if the iron seems only directed to healing Austria's Bosnian grief. Russia cannot, France will not, fight. Francis Joseph has declined to carry out Edward's wish to recommend an agreement about naval armaments at Berlin ("I know that I have made an enemy to-day, but I could not do otherwise"), and the Emperors of Austria and India sit embarrassed, with clouded brows, at dinner in the Ischl Villa, where *macédoine de fruits en petits verres* is served at the close of the meal. At the Marienbad Hotel, at Weimar, the English King's policy costs him another useless dinner; M. Clémenceau, His Majesty's guest, is so animated over coffee in the balcony that people notice it. Some proposal is being rejected. *Rien ne va plus*. What use is the strictest alliance to England when none of the allies will fight for it on the Continent?

Edward gets into the uniform of a dragoon of the guard and goes (at last) to Berlin with his wife. The special train stops in front of the hall at the station, the whole court is compelled to trot, in order not to leave the exalted guests waiting for

a greeting. The horses in the imperial carriage shy and prance, the Empresses Alexandra and Augusta Victoria have to change to another carriage in the open street, and the driver of it does not know to which door of the palace he must go. Edward laughs, however, and sympathises with the head groom, Freiherr von Reischach, who has been upset by the Emperor's scolding. He goes to the Council House, and is polite, discreet, tactful, and simple; he says—as quietly as if no one could possibly doubt the genuineness of his intention—that he is anxious for good and cordial relations with Germany. In the palace he entirely avoids political conversation; it is only in the hour of his departure that he makes the observation that Germany's building of warships is, in view of the rapid growth of its oversea trade, natural and no reason for hostility. The Germans seem to be not more irreconcilable than the Boers, who have sent him the great Rand-diamond. In Wilhelmstrasse the treaty is signed which closes Morocco against them; it is hurriedly signed in order to give the King pleasure.

It was his last joke that, after being so long awaited in vain, he was in Berlin precisely on the day which set up a paper monument of an ambiguous and therefore nerveless policy. From the time when he ceased to play against William, whose temperament he knew so well, he made no other move.

He died in Buckingham Palace where he had been born. The fact that his name reminds us of

the saddest days in recent German history must not mislead us into underestimating or reviling him. It was his business to seek the profit of Great Britain, not of Germany, and he did much for his country : the Reconciliation of the Boers, the Portsmouth Peace, the Act of Algeciras, the Franco-German Treaty of 1909, the Anglo-Japanese and Franco-British Alliance, the Anglo-Russian *entente*, and the revival of the Turco-British friendship. He might well be proud of such a harvest for a nine years' reign. One could hardly expect anything higher. From the time when the struggle began against the right of veto of the Upper House, and the Liberal Government only held its position artificially, with the help of the Irish and the Socialists, Great Britain was paralysed (and on that account the earth became as peaceful as a garden-pond full of aged carp and swans, undisturbed even by a young pike). Edward had been unable to mitigate this malady of his Empire. He knew the history of England, and knew that he must not take part either for or against the Lords. The island-kingdom was unfitted for any serious action. The opponent to whom he was accustomed was no longer at the table. The King found life wearisome, and departed from it. Would he be likely to long for a Conservative victory ? They brought into the Cabinet the cry of Tariff Reform—to say nothing of Lansdowne's jealousy, which seemed determined to prevent royal interference—and Edward was convinced that Germany would reply with a declaration of war to the adoption of protective tariffs in

England. He could not be talked out of this belief, although William protested loudly, and on one occasion let it be known in London, through Alfred Beit, that the German Empire had no idea of preventing a great Power from adopting the commercial system which it had itself adopted thirty years previously. Words, said the uncle with a laugh, are no security against danger. Before the recovery of Russia and the Franco-German reconciliation he could not wish for war (since England had no supporter on the Continent to attack Germany in the east and west). The destruction of the German fleet and the occupation of the German Colonies seemed possible enough, but not an armed intervention which should close the frontiers of the German Empire. A victory that would enfeeble the Germans, but not reduce them to impotence, would be quickly followed by preparation for a war of revenge ; and the clearing-house of the world could not sustain a hundred years of constant menace of war. It is a difficult case when one has to work on the citizens of the Fatherland, not by flattery and intimidation, but by trickery and bluff ; one has to try to come to a plain understanding with them. Yet they continue to shrink from the plan ; their Tirpitz demands further and further delay ; and Sir Ernest Cassel in the end can only say that the Emperor is no longer as much averse from the continental plan as he was in 1908, when he tore up Hardinge's tentative plans at Taunus. On a large scale there is nothing to be done ; the smaller matters (Bagdad Railway, Euphrates-Tigris, Abyssinia) have been

settled long ago. Edward's work was done ; his fortune was complete. The King of England and Emperor of India did not die too soon.

He created a new type of monarch. Until the year 1902 there was no such thing as a King who visited spies, heated hell for his rivals, and brought home from every journey a solid business achievement. Eadweard was the name the Anglo-Saxons once gave to the ruler of the commonweal. Edward won honour for the name ; he protected and enlarged the nation's resources. There was not in the whole United Kingdom a more industrious commercial traveller or a better merchant. He only wore the crown when it was absolutely necessary. He had mingled with men of all classes and professions, had had experiences to which Crown Princes are not usually exposed, had been on familiar terms with financiers and captains of industry, and had learned to look on the world with the eye of a comfortable gentleman. He was quickly at home everywhere. Whether he had to deal with the self-controlled Alexander or his volatile son, with Indian princes or Yankees, with the fiery Delcassé or the witty Clémenceau, he always struck the right note. He could be as majestic as an ancient Spanish king, or as gay as the least scrupulous Parisian. Natural amiability and unfailing tact came to his assistance. None of the bonds that fasten the man born in the purple to the dignity of his office ever hampered his limbs. He showed no anger when his second son (the present King and Emperor) married a princess of an inferior house. One must not be

antiquated ; the man who reigns in mouldy finery will not do much. The imperial element is, like the moral element, taken for granted ; it must be quiet and simple ; it must approach the middle stratum of modern humanity ; it reserves ceremony for high festivals. His country sincerely loved Edward, and his country's profit was plain even in the clouds. He never injured one of his people ; he gave no class or party cause for discontent, much less hatred. He never betrayed the ghost of a frown if another man did better than the Prince of Wales, or the King, on the race-course, at the regatta, or at the tables.

A lucky man. He enjoyed life from the day he left the nursery. Englishmen did not mind that ; they would not have liked a morose and stingy monarch. Prince Bertie, who ate well, drank well, did well at the Derby, at the tables, and settled the fashion of the season, was the man for them ; it did not seem to them a serious misfortune that he was hostile to Bismarck and at times went a little too far with shady people. He always drew his head out of the noose in time, and then gave light-hearted England occasion for another chuckle. His eldest son died ; but he had certain traits, and would never have been a good King or a favourite of his father. From that time hardly a single cloud appeared in the Crown Prince's sky. As King he had everything he desired. He never pushed against the rails which were jealously watched by the guardians of the Constitution. He seemed to live only for pleasure, yet increased the resources of

his Empire by work which never met the eye. He afforded his sporting people a new spectacle—a conflict of uncle and nephew. He was the most popular figure in the Empire. Even one who was annoyed with him could not long resist his amiability and his readiness even to laugh at himself. As there was no hope of winning fresh advantages Edward lay down and died, after a few hours of moderate pain. He never experienced the pain of unfruitful conduct. A lucky man. On every dark day in the history of Britain the soul of his people—a people scattered over the globe—will yearn to see him again.

LEO XIII

LEO THE GENTLE had filled the frame of his life, like the grey-haired, much-travelled Nestor, when he passed away. In the last springtime of his life a last joy had bloomed for him. From Anglia, the island-kingdom where the envoys of Gregory the Great had won the reluctant mind of the Teuton to the Roman Church, a king had come to him ; from the land of Luther came an emperor in all his pomp ; and both bent their heads in reverence before the successor of Peter. The white-haired old man could still enjoy the hour of pride and let eye and ear drink in its delights. For three nights he had expected them ; now the nerves obeyed the will's behest ; and while the German Emperor spoke sadly of the narrowing range of his Church, from whose thick atmosphere he looked with eagerness to further horizons, he was, like a returning son, encouraged by the hopeful, apprehensive glance of a father, and confirmed in a tender anxiety. It was a penetrating glance, unwearied in spite of ninety winters. The Pope found the Emperor prematurely aged. "The furrows on his brow are deeper than on mine, and there is bitterness about his mouth, which shows more plainly since the ends of his moustache have been turned up." With slender, shrunken fingers the aged priest sketched the

German soldier's moustache. The kissing of the feet was spared him. The Emperor had quickly stooped to perform the ceremony, and had reverently pressed to his lips the hand that was stretched out to hinder him, the fleshless quivering hand with the heavy ring of the fisherman and the long nails. "As he did so a bracelet fell over his wrist. That must be a new fashion." Nothing escaped the old man's eye.

This visit, in perfect accord with the rules of the Curia, and the discouragement which he saw in the heart of the zealous Lutheran, were the last joy of the Pontifex. The burning rays of the June sun gradually parched the sap in his veins ; and through the rich and gay-coloured flowers of the Vatican garden stole that numbing of the senses that comes to a man in the day of his ripeness. Leo held himself erect for a long time yet, far beyond men's expectations ; and, as the nones of July approached, he would still pass erect the threshold of his earthly career. The will still forced a slender flame in the outworn, chilly frame, and by its flickering light he rolled up his bundle for the last journey : a will conscious of the right way, which did not forget the viaticum, and even pointed out what spots on the skin must receive the sacred oil. The shudders of death shook the withered trunk, yet it bent, without breaking, like a green twig. The poet would sing his own death-song. With faltering voice he breathed his verses, and wished to correct them, to see them in print. "The day-star sinks dying toward the realm of the golden west." The day-star : so they

had called him, as he now called himself in his last poem. "Qualis artifex !"

Once more he rallies, rises from his bed with smiling obstinacy, and makes the servants, who hold their breath as if in presence of some dread miracle, bear him to the window ; and he looks down and embraces the city, the Campagna, and the Alban Hills in his dying vision. The night is falling ; it is all the brighter in the heart of the dying Pope. Down there, on the *piazza* of St. Peter's, was once the Circus of Caligula and Claudius. There, at Nero's command, the bodies of men flamed towards the sky like living torches. There, on a summer's day in the year 64, Peter groaned on the cross. A saint of the Church : indeed the rock on which the Papal Church was built. Once more, after eighteen hundred and forty years, Rome shines again in the glory of midsummer ; and the Petrine power of the keys reaches out over the seas, into darkest Africa, even to the Equator, and the word of the Bishop of Rome binds and looses the souls of men in black, brown, and yellow bodies. It is a man happy in his passing whom the physicians place in his bed and relieve of the last pain. . . . "The old man lies at rest after a rounded life" ; at his couch Goethe's Pallas Athene would not ask who bemoans the old man. A world mourns about him, for he has "inspired an infinite yearning," and such pictures of life as mortal rarely saw pass before the tearful eyes of the faithful : such as hardly any now sees in our grey days.

Pius IX lay on the gorgeous bed in all the

splendour of his ceremonious robes : the mitre on his head, which rests on gold-cloth cushions, with red gloves and red slippers, which pious fervour pressed to kiss. Cardinal Pecci was busy in the office of Chamberlain. None had ever seen the sixty-year-old priest so restless before ; the man who was esteemed so gentle had never been so stern. After the death of his friend Antonelli he had been called from Perugia to Rome, and had lived in quiet retirement there. He made no effort to attract attention. It had already been foretold to him that he would succeed Pius. He was ready ; he had made good use of the period of banishment, and quaked inwardly as the decisive hour approached. Pius himself, whose strong character resisted every communication of unpleasant truth, had been forced to see in his last days what a vast amount the Papacy had lost, and how necessary it was to lay new and more solid foundations for the power of the Church. Was not such a task too heavy for a feeble old man, for one who had but once, when he was Nuncio at Brussels, caught a glimpse of the distant world, and who had always been more of a scholar than a militant prince of the Church ? Yet might not the Lord work in the frail body of the Carpinetan the miracle that he had refused to the robust and masterful Pius ?

The Chamberlain waited on the Lord. About him a busy intrigue was spun for the purpose of preventing him from obtaining a majority in the Sacred College. He seemed to take no notice, and he turned aside sneering hints with an allusion to his

approaching death. The hand that thrice touched the temples of the dead Pope with the silver hammer did not falter, and his voice rang out clear and strong as he asked: "Art thou asleep, John Mastai?" Then, however, his nervous energy failed. Joachim Pecci was seized with a restlessness that none had seen in him before. He slept little, appeared suddenly where he was not expected, and spoke in an impetuous and authoritative tone that was quite foreign to his nature. The change was so striking that, when he pronounced the absolution before the catafalque in the Sistine Chapel after the Mass of the Dead, Cardinal Oreglia whispered to Cardinal Guibert: "That man is beating the recruiting drum."

That was on February 15, 1878. Pius was buried the following day. A triple shroud of pine, lead, and elm enclosed the peaceful body; six seals fastened up the corpse; the ring of the fisherman, which he had worn through a long life, was broken, and every fragment of it was given, as a precious relic, to some high dignitary. Once more the cardinals assembled, when the speech *Pro Pontifice Eligendo* was read; again they called upon the Lord and begged him to illumine their minds. Then each one whose name was called stood up, went to the altar, and placed his vote in a cup. "Acceptasne electionem de te canonice factam in summum Pontificem?" ("Dost thou obey the voice that calls thee to the Papacy?") A kneeling official put this question to Cardinal Pecci. He had waited on the Lord; he obeyed the call of the Lord. He almost fainted, it

is said, as they led him away. Before he could rest, however, he had to sustain all the pomp of the ceremony of doing homage. The officials clothed him in white robes ; deacons threw candles down before him, and, as they were extinguished, said : " Let worldly fame perish as this light passes." Warm lips were pressed on his hands and feet, and on the hem of his garment. From a balcony he spread out his arms and blessed the Eternal City and the whole of Catholic Christendom. Then it was announced that the new Pope took the name Leo XIII, to show his reverence for Leo XII, the strong Pope who had struggled against Freemasons and other heretics, had published a bull of excommunication in the Jubilee year 1824, and had lifted the Jesuits, the ablest champions of the Church, to greater power than ever.

People were astonished. The Cardinal-Chamberlain had been thought a gentle man and would, it was thought, prove a liberal Pope. It is true that he had, in vehement letters to Victor Emmanuel, protested against the occupation of the Papal States, the treatment of the congregations, and civil marriage. He had punished with suspension priests who had dared to urge the Pope to sacrifice his worldly power, and Ratazzi had found in him a stern and inflexible spirit. But all that had happened in the reign of the inexorable Pius, in the first stage of passionate resistance to the usurper, and others had said that this cardinal, who posed as a scholar and a poet, would, as soon as he secured the power of independent action, be guided by the



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POPE LEO XIII

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native mildness of this own character. Now, as if to falsify every faintly whispered hope, he recalls in his choice of a name the man who had reopened the dungeons of the Inquisition! Pius IX, with his motto "*Crux de cruce*," had weighed heavily on the Church; a thousand unfulfilled desires had looked yearningly to Pecci's motto, "*Lumen in cœlo*." Were the rays of this light destined to blast the tender shoots of their young hope?

Opinions were divided, and the character of the new Supreme Pastor, obscured by party hatreds and prepossessions, was not clear for a long time. He will lash us with scorpions, said some, while others said that a Jacobin had mounted the chair of Peter. Both parties consoled themselves with the sight of his feebleness. Here was a different man from Pius, whose form was straight even in old age, and whose fleshy, dominating head was lit by an inner glow. This long, bony, pale ascetic's head, with its thin and bloodless lips, would assuredly not wear the tiara very long; they would soon lay this meagre, almost transparent body in its shroud. He could hardly stand erect. Even on the day on which they did him homage, when, white and slim as a wax candle himself, he unsteadily ascended the staircase of the candle-bearer, it was whispered in every corner of the Vatican: "A dying Pope! His Holiness will not be with us long. This faint light will go out presently."

"*Non videbit annos Petri*." . . . A quarter of a century had passed since that scene, yet the ninety-

three-year-old Pope still held the pastoral staff in his fleshless hands. He still hovered, like a white shade, over the astonished heads of the faithful on great festivals. He still beat the drum for his aims with unabated energy. As late as the year 1902 he appealed in burning words to heretics to return to the warm bosom of the Catholic Church. There alone would they find peace. That reason is folly, and that a materialistic philosophy does not promote the welfare of mankind, was clearly proved long ago, he said. What profit has come of freedom, of research, of all the pretty illusions that have haunted the brains of men since the Reformation? Morality is lowered, the walls of States are shaking; that is the punishment of the Lord for apostasy from the true faith. Leo XIII called the encyclical in which he wrote these severe indictments his testament. And the old man who gave this parting salutation to weak mortals, as he stood on the threshold of eternity, had for eleven years been known as the modern Pope.

The name fitted him and, in spite of his testament, will cling to him. When Antonelli was dead, and the eye of the Pope was no longer thwarted by deceptive veils, Pius had said with a sigh: "My successor will begin again from the beginning, and will have to follow an entirely different policy from mine." Leo had recognised that. He found the Papacy robbed of its temporal power, and was too shrewd to entertain the hope that time would ever efface this loss from the book of history. The fine nerves of the heir of Pius perceived an even worse loss. The

hierarchic discipline was more severe than ever ; Pius had taken care that the giant body of the Church should obey the slightest pressure of the reins. But the Church had become a stranger in the modern world : not merely to the heretics, but to many of the faithful. Its exertions were everywhere without result. To prop up the falling edifice he became the enemy of all that is, inaccessible to new desires. A venerable ruin, shaken by the elements. There was still the proud old saying, "Stat crux, dum volvitur orbis" ; but was the Papacy as solid as the Saviour's Cross ? Could it hope to meet the storms that fell on it without some substantial change ?

Leo often spoke of himself as an admirer of St. Thomas, and must certainly have read, in the archives of the Monte Cassino Abbey, where the scholastic genius of the Neapolitan youth was trained, the wise words written by Cremonini, the friend of Galilei : "Mundus numquam est ; nascitur semper et moritur" (The world never *is* ; it is born and dies every minute.) A good motto for one who wishes to dominate the human world of eternally withering and eternally renewed illusions. He must not cling to what is passing. That is what Pius had done. He had been content to expend his heated temperament in splendid storms. He would not hear of any compromise, any compact with hostile forces. He had no doubt whatever that his curse was heard in heaven and brought down the judgment of God on the unclean souls of sinners. How many he had cursed who still held their

heads erect and pushed onward with unimpaired courage !

Leo looked to another method for the relief of the heavily pressed Church. No carnal movement seemed to have any influence on the meagre old man ; no one ever saw him angry, or heard a sharp word fall from his lips. He resumed the old programme of the Christian Platonists and followed the footsteps of the Angelic Doctor. The Fathers of the Church had endeavoured to adapt philosophy and the treasures of Hellenic culture to the needs of Christianity ; Thomas of Aquin had devoted a great deal of his power to the task of introducing the Aristotelic spirit into the minds of Catholics ; and Leo would in turn reconcile the Church and the world, faith and knowledge. The Church had been too long a hindrance in all the ways of civilisation ; in future it was to lead civilisation. What avail were curses against the new spirit ? We must come to an understanding with it, give it light and air, and, while we stroke it with the left hand, disarm it with the right, by paternal advice. Mankind must again recognise that science itself had a Christian origin and that there is no impassable gulf between the scientist and the faithful. That was the aim of the new Pope ; it was found to be the aim of a man who served the masses not less zealously than he served his God, had a great love of Dante, and polished the Ciceronian periods of his pastoral letters as carefully as if, like Æneas Sylvius, he sought literary fame.

The Papal States were lost since the Italian troops had filed through the Porta Pia on September 20,

1870, and Victor Emmanuel had said : " Ci siamo, ci resteremo." The wound was still too fresh, the power of tradition too great, for the successor of Pius IX to think of making peace at the expense of his power. He remained "the prisoner of the Vatican," and protested correctly against the robbery when it was his duty to do so. Privately, however, Leo may often have said to himself that this robbery was a good thing for the Church. All secular power attracts hatred ; a suffering Pope is stronger than one throned in all the pomp of a court. A church that would really be the *ecclesiarum omnium mater et caput* needs no domestic power, and will be rather hindered than helped in its propaganda by too close a connection with a particular country. At a time when treaties were heaped up in small mountains in the chancelleries of all the Great Powers, Leo sought no alliance ; we may believe that he would have refused an alliance even if he had been promised as reward the restoration of the Papal States. The man who surrenders entirely to one friend to-day will have at least one enemy to-morrow ; and the Pope must retain the opportunity to enter into a peaceful understanding with every modern Power.

When in 1890, on November 12, Cardinal Lavigerie toasted the French squadron in Algiers, and said that the Catholic can accommodate himself to any form of Government, such apparently revolutionary language in the mouth of a prince of the Church was thought to be the casual expression of a mood. It was soon learned that it was meant very seriously, and was more than a personal confession of faith.

Leo had recollected the advice to let the dead bury their dead. He could only reach his object if Catholics sacrificed useless anger and ceased to draw hatred on themselves as supporters of reaction. Twenty years before he had written to the Spanish bishops to say that the idea that religion was bound up with the programme of any particular party must be condemned as erroneous. To many that seems superficial wisdom, but the man who recalls earlier (and not very far distant) days will not assent to this. Catholics were everywhere the champions or auxiliary troops of reaction. They shook their fists against the Schism, the Reformation, the Revolution, the Kulturkampf, yet could not stem the tide of development. Russia could not be won back to the Roman priest-king; France would admit no more kings by the grace of the Pope; and the political work of Luther and Bismarck mocked their impotent fury. A situation that condemned Catholics to stupid inaction ought not to last. Leo Tolstoi, the saviour of weary artists, might preach to peoples that happiness lay behind them, and urge them to turn back. A Pope who wanted to work, to reconcile the world and the Church, must not announce this sort of gospel, and brand every forward step as a crime and a sin against the Holy Ghost. There is an old distrust even in minds which are not yet devoid of faith, and it is roused whenever there is talk of the rights of the Church; those three words, *universitas*, *antiquitas*, *unitas*, on the walls of the Church, inspire a fear that the age of Gregory and Innocent may return and bring with it the paralysing

power of theocracy and the horrors of the Inquisition. These ghosts were laid by the policy of Leo XIII. He summoned Catholics to take their part in politics and bade them accommodate themselves to the times, however bad they seemed. He broke the bond that had joined the fates of the throne and the altar. Often and solemnly he made peace with democracy, against which the Church had struggled so long.

The issue decided in his favour. When he wrote to Rampolla, who was then Nuncio at Madrid, that the bishops must keep aloof from the Carlist agitation, when he entrusted Monsignore Czacki, the Parisian Nuncio, with the mission of finding a *modus vivendi* between the Republic and the Curia, many of the cardinals shook their heads and said that the *lumen in cælo* had turned out to be a will-o'-the-wisp. All doubt was set at rest long ago. In Asia and Africa the lines of the papal structure are stronger than ever, and in Europe the power of the Papacy has grown beyond all expectation; even with Russia the able politician on the chair of Peter came to an understanding. Bismarck chose him as arbitrator in the Carolina dispute, and William II asked his advice when an attempt was made to regulate the protection of the workers by means of international laws. Such great and unexpected results were attained, although the Pope had often said that the Church would not now support the old dynasties in any circumstances.

Men like Montalembert and Lacordaire had long ago recommended peace with the democracy; Lamennais had even more eloquently pleaded for

it. He created the union for the defence of religious liberty, and tried to find a way from the ebbing tide of Catholic fanaticism to the forces of modern life. The Church, he said, should seek solid foundations in the developing consciousness of the century, and its servants should unreservedly take their stand on the Charter ; but, above all, there must be a separation of Church and State. His " Paroles d'un croyant " were echoed in every language, and they proclaimed the sovereignty of Christian peoples. The censure that Gregory XVI would hurl against the unruly priest did not attain its end ; the encyclical *Mirari vos* is forgotten, and Lamennais lives in the history of Catholicism as one of the strongest workers of the nineteenth century. Even before his time Saint-Simon had hailed the Pope as the saviour from social misery. We read in his " Nouveau Christianisme " : " True Christianity must concern itself with the earthly, as well as the heavenly welfare of men. It is the Pope's duty to organise society according to the moral principles of the Saviour. It is not enough to preach to the faithful that the poor are our brothers in God ; the Church militant must fearlessly use all its power and resources to improve as quickly as possible the moral and physical condition of the class to which the greater part of mankind belong." And a pupil of Saint-Simon, the Jewish banker, Isaac Pereire, repeated the cry of his master, when Cardinal Pecci was elected Pope. " How," he cried (in his " La Question religieuse "), " could the Church fail to see that the movement of the world is not a reckless

and anti-Christian work, but one directed by Providence in order to unveil in all its divine splendour the deepest truth of Christianity? Never was the Church called upon to fulfil a nobler duty, and one more worthy of its founder. Was it not appointed the mother of the orphan and the protectress of the oppressed? It abolished the slavery of pagan times, and broke the yoke of the feudal lords; it must deliver the modern worker from the bonds of serfdom. Only the powerful organisation of the Catholic Church can secure social action on a large scale. Such action is not possible until there are, above the legislature, the scholars, and the manufacturers, apostles and missionaries who are prepared to sacrifice their lives for the good of humanity, independent men who are courageous enough to tell the truth to all. Where shall we find such men if not in the bosom of the Church?" We do not know which of these voices reached the ear of Leo XIII. He has, at all events, attempted to do what they wanted. On May 15, 1891, there was issued to his venerable brethren in the Catholic faith the encyclical *De Conditione Opificum*, which began with the words: "Rerum novarum semel excitata cupidine. . . ." The thirst for novelty which had angered his predecessors was one of the factors with which the Pope reckoned. Until that day the old coinage alone had been good at Rome.

Many a time since that date the social activity which then began so noisily and ended so rapidly has been ridiculed. Not one of the towering hopes which arose when the Pope received the pilgrimage

of French workers at the Vatican has been realised or could have been realised. It was only pious simplicity that could rise to the illusion that the Holy Father could, with a single wave of his magical staff, banish the misery which in various forms had lain upon mankind for thousands of years. The mockers, however, might have reserved their wit for a better occasion. It was a great day that inspired a head surmounted by a tiara with the resolution to "go to the people" and leave to their fate the dynasties and the whole host of Powers that regarded themselves as alone legitimate. Some day perhaps later Thomists will tell a listening earth that on that day began the renascence of the Catholic Church which thousands of souls eagerly awaited.

The Church can wait. An able Pope is always patient—*patiens quia æternus*. The rigidity was softened and new life was awakened in the community of the faithful. Men ventured to speak of reforms, the old walls were examined, and the hand that pointed to breaches need no longer tremble. Who had taken any notice hitherto of the letters of the Bishops of Rome? Now they were read by all educated people, criticised by scholars and politicians, and noticed in non-Catholic journals. The Papacy became a spiritual power once more, and the veils of legend that hid it from the eyes of men were gradually lifted. No one believes any longer that all the Popes led a life of orgiastic pleasure; the Borgias are as rare as the Hildebrands at the Vatican. When Gutzkow wrote

his rationalistic novels against the Roman magician, he regarded the Pope as a giant spider, sucking the blood of all that approached and paralysing all living forces. Later still, long after the glory of young Germany had faded, we thought, when people spoke of the Pope, of Benedict XIV, who, while he gave his blessing from the balcony of St. Peter's, is said to have called himself the greatest impostor: "In the crowd yonder one deceives another: I deceive them all." We are now bolder and more sceptical, but also juster. We believe that life at the Vatican is much the same as at other courts, except that the courtiers, the bureaucracy, are shrewder in attaining their end. Nor is this group dominated by the desire to gag the minds of their subjects, to rob poor mankind of its little portion of happiness, to extinguish all light and all lust for life. We see men who attend to their little affairs, and are generally convinced that what they do is useful to the great Christian community. The old man whom they serve was admired by the deadly enemies of Catholicism, but scarcely feared by any man who was not subject to him. Rome had lost its terrible nimbus; and Leo XIII was the modern Pope.

Did he really deserve the name, even after the unmodern encyclical which he called his testament? Even that was composed by a man of culture. Greater pessimists than Leo have passed the same judgment on "the achievements of modern times"; but they have not gone on to recommend to the disillusioned the most ancient remedy—religion.

That, however, a Pope is bound to do unless he abdicates his character. He can only be as modern as his rank and surroundings will allow him to be. Such limitations, however, are not for Popes only in the narrow world of interests and passions. The pupil of St. Thomas did not speak otherwise in his testament than he had done before. He had written eleven years before that the foundations of society were shattered because it had turned away from the true faith. It was the old formula, and could only surprise any one because the Pope was believed to be occupied with more modern things. For a long time only a faint echo of the confusing noises of the world had reached the ear of the nonagenarian. He knew not what a gulf had yawned in the minds of men, and, even had he known it, he could not have bridged it. People might dream of a Pope who lived according to the teaching of Jesus, abandoned all pomp, and was a poor man among the poor. He would be an interesting figure, but not a Pope, not the far-seen apex of the pyramid that has been raised by the age-long labours of able and experienced men. A Pope may be modern, may understand the signs of the times, and may relieve the bark of Peter of the ballast of centuries; he remains the guardian of an institution which, if it is to last, must be as it is and always was.

Leo XIII ensured, by his tact and his quiet use of all his resources, that educated men would once more listen to his voice without bias or hatred. He adapted to modern times the most powerful organisation that was ever known. His political procedure

was quite modern, so modern that any statesman or industrial leader might study it with advantage. But that is the full extent of the power of the most powerful. The life-work of one extraordinary man hardly sufficed to win for the Church the right of existence, to prove that a Catholic may be true to his faith and work out his salvation in any form of State, with any political creed. But another conflict is impending, and it threatens, not Rome alone, but the deepest roots of Christian teaching. The feeling is slowly breaking on mankind that they must vote, seek a new morality, and create a new home for their spirits. The prayer that falls from the lip and is contradicted by every step in their lives, the empty cult of forceless hypocrisy, avails no longer. The Pope who can meet this conflict and save the power of the Church undiminished from the ruins will be the greatest miracle of Christian history.

The tramp of a menacing foe has been heard in Rome, and many a priest has looked out restlessly from the old walls to see if the army draws near for the siege. It is not yet approaching ; it must first equip itself, draw up the ranks, and fill up the visible gaps with hastily gathered recruits. In France, the old experimenting ground of human history, the first movement was made. Priestly arrogance, seeking to bring the State under the yoke of the Church, had to be put down. That was the cry at first ; almost as in the days of Mirabeau, when men set out to avenge the abuse of feudal rights, and drowned the remains of the theocratic

illusion in rivers of blood. Farseeing men perceived even at the time that the movement would be carried far beyond the aim with which the narrow mind of the leader inspired it. The ephemeral fame of Combes and his monk-hating success will presently pale ; perhaps some day the monks and nuns will return to the land of St. Louis ; but pious talk will never again banish Antichrist, the earthly enemy of every proud ghost, from the desecrated land. " Religions are the offspring of ignorance, and do not long survive their mother," said Schopenhauer ; and to-day hundreds of thousands, nay millions, agree with him. They feel that the venerable Asiatic doctrine has no value for the new life of the European, that he contradicts it in every hour of his spontaneous activity, and that, as a hypocrite, he will be a horror to the sincere faithful and a jest to the godless. No reform, no herb planted on the fringes of reason, can heal the sick conscience. Even Luther's work was but the splendid blunder of one who did not know men, one whom disgust repelled from flaunting idols to the service of the Logos, the baldest and most meagre of all idols ; Rome has no further reason to fear him. No reformation, only a revolution that leaves no stone of the old structure of legends standing on another, can break the walls of Rome ; and a severe storm threatens from France.

Mea culpa, the Pope cried on his death-bed ; and many princes of the Church believed that the self-accusation was more than a sacramental formula. Did not he who lay in the sweat of death really

bear the greater part of the blame? Why did he depart from the old way, the way hallowed by the tradition of a thousand years, leave kings to their fate, join the democracy, and speak openly of the wage-slavery of the proletariat? Why did he hold up to the frenzied crowd the Saviour as a working man, as one who almost to the close of his life earned his bread by manual labour? He who points the first finger at the wicked. . . . The anathemas were no longer launched against Communism; Christian Socialism gathered strength. No. Rome must remain what it was; only in alliance with the ruling powers could it flourish. If a single stone was shifted the whole structure might come down in a night. In France people are saying that, if we had renounced the Republic and remained under the lily-marked banner of legitimacy, the situation would be better. Who knows? The man from Carpineto merely courted popular applause.

So many chattered, and some felt. They knew not the spirit that quitted its outworn tenement, as some timid snail leaves its house. Death, Dickens says somewhere, often gives back to old people the face of their childhood and enables us to see the young man in the aged. Did no one see the features of the young Joachim in the angular and relaxed countenance of Leo? When Anna Pecci bore a boy to her husband Lodovico, there was a warrior of the faith in St. Petersburg who wrote: "There is no religion on the earth now; the human race cannot remain in this condition. Wait a little, and the natural affinity of religion and science will

unite them in the head of some genius. The appearance of this man cannot be far distant ; possibly he has already appeared." The prophet was Joseph de Maistre, the stoutest and most cultured champion of the Roman Church, the only one who then dare cross swords with men of the type of Hume, Bacon, and Gibbon. Nine years before the publication of his famous work, "The Pope," he had said : "There is no religion on the earth now." The saviour to whom he looked forward then lay in his cradle near the little town of Anagni. Leo never quoted any writer of recent times so often as he did Joseph de Maistre ; he learned more useful things of him than of St. Thomas. To him he owed his chief dogma—a firm belief in the natural affinity of religion and science. This belief was his staff, and remained his support until extreme old age. But such a staff could only help a man of some knowledge, and therefore the Bishop of Perugia, the Cardinal-Chamberlain, the Pope, sat up night after night over books and papers, and fed his hungry brain with worldly food that the Congregation of the Index regarded with suspicion. Who had ever before known a Pope to mention Bastiat in the same encyclical with Thomas Aquinas, without a shudder ? Who spoke *ex cathedra* about interest, wages, usury, and strikes, like some courtier of the crowd elected by a majority of votes ? Leo was almost as much at home with Ricardo and Henry George as with his favourites, Aristotle and Dante. He felt that this knowledge was indispensable for one who would go by the great and luminous signs of the times.

He did also endeavour to work in union with the ruling powers ; not, however, like the murmuring cardinals, with the sulky powers who were worn almost to death, but those which looked to the rise of new suns.

He had not made himself the way into the dark realm of social misery ; Ketteler, Manning, Ireland, Gibbons, Count de Mun, Winterer, and Decurtius, following the lead of Saint-Simon and Lamennais, had preceded him. But now the new fashion broke on the ears of men from the chair of Peter. On it sat an old man who could learn and profit by new experience, who listened when Archbishop Ireland cried at Baltimore that Jesus had made the social question the deepest foundation of his message and turned from the lips of Cardinal Gibbons the excommunication of the Knights of Labour. Those who would criticise him had not a difficult task. In his pastoral letters of 1877 and 1878 Bishop Pecci had acknowledged that he was a pupil of the Christian Socialists, and had spoken of the life of the workers and the lot of the women and children overstrained in the industrial machine. The encyclicals of May 1891 and February 1892 show that he did not become deaf afterwards. The former pities "the mass of the proletariat groaning almost in the condition of slaves." In the latter we find the remarkable passage : "The Church of Christ alone has hitherto been able to maintain its ancient form of government, and will keep it unaltered to the end of time ; but history teaches us in a hundred pages that in purely human societies the political

forms are exposed to constant change at the hand of time, the great changer. This change often consisted only in unimportant alterations of the ruling house, but at times it created entirely new structures and transferred power to those who had formerly had none in the State." This passage, which was intended to induce the French clergy to abandon their sterile hopes, made a bridge from St. Peter's to the democracy. So far had the pupil of Joseph de Maistre gone ; so near was he now to Galilei's sceptical friend. Did he see with his mind's eye the approaching collapse of the House of Savoy ? In an Italian Republic there would be only one crowned head, and he, even without territory, could show himself to the people, not as a prisoner, but free. Leo, however, probably never thought of that. He cared nothing for show, and, however much the scarlet-robed officials repeated it, he never courted popularity. Like Goethe's Gregory, he saw the great as great, and the small as small. The natural affinity of religion and science—that was what hovered before him. He could not, like the old Popes, mount a horse and win the earth for his creed with a naked sword ; he would quietly have to entice emancipated minds back into the structure of faith.

That was accomplished by the mild, gentle old man, whom his opponents, at and after the conclave, called muddle-headed, a politician coated with Thomistic whitewash, one who, with his bony frame, his halting gait, and his nasal voice, would, after the massive person of Mastai, be a caricature of a

Pope. He attained his end because he avoided steering the bark of Peter against the stream. A world mourns him—a larger world than that which mourned Pius. *Lumen in cælo*. . . . From the Vatican window he looked again upon the sun, looked far over the heads of Christendom, and closed his weary eyes before the besiegers from France reached St. Angelo.

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Prophets, sibyls, saints, and heroes look down from the roof. All the marvels of the story of creation, all the painful features of the fall, appear, sweet and terrible, before the wondering eye. God the Father Himself is there: in the serene confidence of a world-maker, and in the majestic anger of an inexorable judge. From the altar-wall frowns the Last Judgment. The last wall of mortality seems to be burst by the yearning of the pious mind; it is as if the feeble vision of man penetrated the open heavens for the first time, and human weakness must learn to shudder here for the last time before so terrible a splendour. With stern visage the Saviour rises from the throne of judgment and separates the just from the unjust. The restless eye wanders awe-stricken over the pale and terrible scene, and in a few seconds lives the thousand-year story of the ancient and ever-new folly: wanders from the Christ-God, who opens the door of the heart's shrine, to Charon, the heathen ferryman, who empties the damned souls from his boat as lightheartedly as if he were shaking mice from a sack. All is drowned in the dirge of this trial of

the world. Signorelli, Perugino, Ghirlandajo, and Botticelli are dumb ; only the pious hybrid, the demon forced under the yoke of the Church, Michael Angelo, speaks.

To the old men who scurry about in violet robes these are pictures of the saints, like others ; they do not suspect that here one of Lucifer's race has dared to give form to his titanic vision with the industry of a manual worker ; they have long ceased to appreciate the famous ornamentation of the chapel. They read their Mass and release penitents from the bonds of sin. So it is directed when a Sovereign Pontiff lies in his pallium on the golden cloth of the catafalque. So it was exactly twenty-five years before. When the Cardinal-Chamberlain Pecci, on February 16, 1878, gave absolution to the crowded congregation with nervous countenance and strained voice, after the second Mass of the Dead, did not Cardinal Oreglia whisper in the ear of his neighbour : " That man is beating the recruiting drum " ? For Oreglia hated the Chamberlain, and was determined to make him fight for his victory in the Conclave. But Joachim Pecci, who conquered, though he was old and mild, knew his man, believed that he would be his successor, and said : " When I am dead, Oreglia will touch my temples very gently with the silver hammer, for fear he might awaken me." It had come to this. Oreglia was Chamberlain and ruler in the Vatican, and already crowned with the tiara by men inspired with that wrong idea. Now he beats the drum. All that was left of Leo was a badly embalmed

corpse, putrefying in the heat. Quick with him into his threefold prison, on which the Chamberlain puts his seal, and then break up the ring and give away the fragments as relics. . . . The ring is missing. No one can find it, and they are impatient to get on. The Magister Camerae must look for it later. They pass quickly to the speech *Pro Pontifice Eligendo*, the preparation of the cells in which the cardinals are to be confined, and the election. A few hours suffice. The Chamberlain guards the isolated house, and presently the master of ceremonies can, at his summons, ascend the steps of the three stories and cry to the cardinals: "To the chapel, monsignori." They hurry to it; not in mourning now, but in the scarlet robe. Once more the prophets, sibyls, saints, and heroes look down from the roof—on holy men who are choosing the holiest; or, perhaps, the one who suits them best. And the Last Judgment frowns from the altar-wall.

A few weeks previously the sick Pope had gone into a balcony over the garden in the cool of the evening. He saw that death was coming and did not want to die; he knew that a place of honour awaited him near the throne of the Most High, yet clung to the happiness and glory of earth. He was like a transparent figure in ivory; yet the will to live watched night and day, unsated and untired, in the fleshless body. The city is gay with the luxuriance of midsummer; and the old man stretches out his arms in yearning, as if he could command the reluctant earth-forces. He stands out of the

dusk like a white skeleton. But ecstasy ceases and the arms fall like twigs that have been lashed up by the wind. When the pale shade has gone, a golden ring lies in the balcony. It slipped from the lean finger, and his ear was too intent on the silence of nature to catch the slight sound. Was the summer yearning too earthly, unworthy of a successor of Peter, and was the *annulus piscatoris* struck from the cold bony hand on that account ? . . .

Dark powers hover about in the ghostly evening, and the sacred ring lies unnoticed and unhonoured on the stone for hours, as if of no value. In the grey dawn of the following day a Roman raven catches sight of the glittering bauble ; it snatches it up in its beak and flies with it to the coast, to its nest. But the burden soon becomes too heavy for the bird, and it drops it on the Tyrrhenian shore. Thither comes a man from Fiumicino who takes fish to Rome and serves the Vatican. He finds the ring among the mussels. He had never seen such a thing before. St. Peter himself is represented on it, sitting in his boat and holding in his right hand the key of the Kingdom of Heaven. That is a find worth two hundred *soldi*, surely. He must, however, tell the news carefully ; some monsignore must have lost the jewel. But inspectors and officials have long fingers, and do not give what they get into them. Bartolo, the cook, will know what to do. He is a clever man. He has been in the city for decades, is liked by all the prelates and told of all intrigues, and greatly envied for his savings by all the servants of the black city. The

death of the Pope has not moved him very deeply. Mastai Ferretti was the man for him. He had praised him so often, so loudly, and so long that the kitchen servants gave him at length the nickname of Pio Nono. Joachim Pecci? A holy man, a scholar, a poet; but things had turned out as some had shrewdly foretold after the Conclave of 1878. Naturally; the conclavists had received a smaller gratification than usual, and the Swiss had not received the tip that every new Pope had hitherto given them for the period of the interregnum. It was a bad omen, and things went on as it foreboded. Three-fourths of the jubilee offerings were knocked down to the highest bidder for the benefit of the Holy See; the wine was *crémant imperial* at one and sixpence a bottle. Economy in everything; not a trace left of the luxury of Mastai. Why? Small people might put away their money, but the successor of Peter had to maintain his rank. When any one winced, and grumbled at the poor house-keeping, the only consolation he received was a laugh and the advice: "Do as I do; I manage on twenty *soldi* a day." All had admired Pius, the handsome, proud old man, whose strong voice filled the Basilica to the last, who knew how to maintain his state, and had always the right word for the poorest and the most powerful. Leo was invisible; he rarely let himself be seen and was rarely affable. He was mild enough, it is true: too mild for Bartolo's taste. It made him angry to hear the unceasing litany of the master's gentleness. As if the representative of the Almighty had no higher duty than

always to be gentle ! Was Innocent III gentle when he exclaimed that the Saviour had entrusted to Peter, not only the government of the Church, but the dominion of the world ? Or Boniface VIII when he told kings not to forget that, just as the moon owed all its light to the sun, they owed their territorial power to the favour of the Church ? That was the proper language for one who wore the triple crown. What gentleness led to might be seen in France and elsewhere. No : Cardinal Ferrieri had spoken only too truly when he called Pecci proud, and said with a sigh, after the election, that a one-eyed man could play the ruler only amongst the blind. And then, think of the superstition of supposing that one could appease birds of prey with lumps of sugar ! No resolution to make open war on the thievish House of Savoy : nothing but tactical manœuvres and prudent compromises. And then there was this scarcely hidden shrinking from death, as if he were not too sure of Paradise and eternal life. There must be no complaint ; every one must be content with what he has. But a Pope who calls the Chamberlain from his warm bed at night in order to declaim Latin verses to him. . . . Dear me, it was much better at the Vatican under Pius.

In such speech the man from Fiumicino found his godfather, with a fine crowd about him ; at critical times everybody came to hear what Pio Nono had to blame and to predict. The fishes were quickly inspected and found fresh. The fisherman, however, had another matter to speak

of ; he drew his patron in a corner and told him of his find. Bartolo turned pale, but kept his presence of mind and cried, as if in joke : “ *Extra omnes.* ” It was the old cry that the cardinal-chamberlain made at the Conclave. They all went out. “ Just the same as Pio Nono : always a good table and a good laugh. ” When the last of them had closed the door, the cook turned on the man. Where had he got the ring ? On the north mole at the mouth of the Tiber, near the old fort ? A fine story to tell ! This ring with the figure of Peter in his boat and the key of heaven ! Was he a thief or a receiver ? The ring had never left the Vatican, and the story of finding it on the coast was a transparent lie. Did the man think he could trick an old fox ? Sell a ring with which every brief had been sealed for a quarter of a century ! . . . Suddenly the cook changed his tack. In point of fact, was it his business to inquire where the ring came from ? Everybody knew that the fisherman was honest ; he was quite dumb, could not understand Bartolo’s anger, trembled with anxiety, and would like to leave the ring and get away. May not a miracle have happened ? The judge became more lenient. Before a Conclave everybody is busy and irritable. He meant no harm and was not imputing dishonesty to his old friend. A pretty ring : no doubt some old legacy, as they do finer work to-day, and the gold did not seem to be of good quality. In fine, the thing was not valuable ; it had probably been at the bottom of the sea for fifty or a hundred years (the man from Fiumicino

could not decipher the Latin inscription) and been recently washed up. A good find, nevertheless, for a poor devil. Thinking of two hundred *soldi*, was he? That was really nonsense, but one is in a good mood at times and would do a good turn for a friend. "I will give you double—twenty *lire*—though I am damned hard up. But—keep your mouth shut! My people already say that I am storing up treasures. Moreover, it is not every one who will believe your story about the seashore; you would at least come into court for concealing the find. Not a word, therefore. My regards to Monna Lena."

With the four hundred *soldi* and the price of his fish the man could to-day afford the railway from Ponte Galera. Signor Bartolo crept into the dining-room, locked the door, rubbed the ring until his arm was stiff, and began to dream. This was a big matter that the unsuspecting fisher had entrusted to him. It might be well to wait a little. . . . Certainly the ring, as a curiosity, was worth a thousand *lire*, but the business was dangerous, and Bartolo had never before meddled with such matters. A little bit of smuggling may be done by anybody but this might turn out to be a mortal sin. It had already been made known that the fisherman's ring had disappeared. The *camera papalis* was in a fine state; every hole and corner was searched, and no one knew how far the search would be carried. No, he must not do that sort of thing for his Pietro, his only son, for whom he worked and served. He was to be better than his father, and

when he left the Almo Capranicense, was destined for high honours in the army of the Church. Then. . . . It came to him like a flash of lightning. Is it a sign of a divine promise? How otherwise did this symbol of supreme power come to *him*? And it was a fisherman, of Peter's trade, that brought it. It is one's duty to wait on the Lord. When the day of consecration comes, the father will place the ring on the pious youth's finger, and Pietro may then enter into his own.

The Collegio Capranico. . . . There was educated the boy whose name was now on the lips of all, on both sides of the revolving turret in the isolated election-room—Mariano Rampolla of Tindaro. One could imagine the slim cleric painted on a golden background; add a pair of wings and the eye dreamed of a genuine Fra Angelico. On August 17 he enters upon his sixtieth year of life, and time has left its traces on him. To the distant observer he still seems young. The slender form is erect, the eye is as luminous, whenever the lid is lifted, as that of a man of thirty; it is only when you draw near that you see the crow's-feet on the broad surface of his quiet face, accustomed to smiling silence. It is a head no one can forget, the delight and desire of every artist, but no longer the head of a tender saint. The eye recalls another Giovanni on gazing at this sombre greatness—that of Cimabue, who created the Saviour and the Evangelist of Pisa. Yet there is something quite modern in this man's appearance; something that no ancient and no

Florentine of the Renaissance could have shown. An enigmatic being: a man of the world and a priest, elegant yet stiff in demeanour, almost disembodied yet at home in all ranks of earthly life. Under his eye-brows is a flame before which men tremble, and round his mouth there is often the pious smile of a peaceful statue. A man who once felt a swift horse stumble under him in a dangerous ride, and had since then remained on the level, on the safe, common street that displays dogma to the faithful. Jesuits were the first teachers of the boy, who was of an old Sicilian stock. From them he soon learned that priests must trust blindly in Providence, *perinde ac si cadaver esset, quod quoquo versus ferri et quacunque ratione tractari se sinit*. No one ever listened to them more readily and effectively. Mariano was too delicate for the hard work in the regiment of St. Ignatius; he would gladly have gone the way of Loyola, or lived under rule as a black, brown, or white monk, but Providence wished to arm his young zeal in the turmoil of secular affairs. He took with him to Madrid, to the Nunciature, only a repute for untiring industry. But the Nuncio, Simeoni, soon found that they had not sent him a common monsignore, and, when he was made cardinal and head of the Propaganda, he begged that he might have this able assistant in his more important work.

Rampolla became secretary of the oriental section and, with restrained power, put an end to the controversy which divided the bishops of Armenia and set them in antagonism, to the grave detriment of

the Roman Church. He had now a reputation for something more than endurance and industry. A man who kept aloof from all the gossip of the prelates, never lounged about the ante-chambers seeking the latest news, and was only visible when it was his duty to be visible, was made of different stuff than the crowd of idlers and strivers who, in order to miss nothing, stuck their heads out of doors at the least noise, and were delighted when some poor fly was caught in their net. The secretary knew every page in the *acta*, could recognise the hand that had written every passage, in every complaint could recognise a complainer of a particular temperament, saw the essential point in the most confused mass of words, and soon became a master in the art of silence and of listening. Such gifts could not remain without reward in the Vatican, where the selection of useful men is more careful than in lay administrations, even with Jacobini as Secretary of State. Mistakes had been made at Madrid. Simeoni's successor, Monsignore Bianchi, kept open with the Carlists and incurred the annoyance of King Alfonso, to whom he was accredited. Anything more stupid could hardly be conceived. A man who represents the Church must not be influenced by his personal likes and dislikes ; he must wait until victory crowns one of the combatants and decides where the inherited treasures of the faith are hidden during storms. Pius was dead, and the old man who succeeded him knew that legitimacy without power is a mere theory and felt the useless folly of every attempt to chain the bark of Peter to

transitory forms of State. Bianchi would do no harm in the Sacred College ; for Spain it was necessary to have an able man who could disentangle the confused threads. Leo made Rampolla Archbishop *in partibus* of Heracleia, and offered him the place of Bianchi. He was not yet forty years old, and was afraid ; he had just entered the Congregation of Extraordinary Church-affairs, was attached to his work, and shrank from returning to a secular court. However, "Thy will be done"—*perinde ac si cadaver esset*. At Madrid he soon recovered the lost ground, although he avoided the festivities of the court ; he seemed to be more priest than diplomatist, and on that account secured the ear of Alfonso and the Queen, who were grateful to him for ending the domestic struggle and compelling the Carlist bishops to recognise the rule of the younger Bourbons. He worked quietly at Madrid for nearly five years. Then he was clothed with the purple and was made Cardinal-Secretary of State. He was already a hope ; eighteen cardinals adhered to him, and, when he took up the difficult position of Secretary of State, it was whispered behind his back : "That man is not ambitious, or he would have declined and had a majority without difficulty in the next Conclave." That was in 1887. From that time the names of Leo and Rampolla were almost inseparable. They lived in the eyes of men, as a pair who were making history. The Secretary was shrewd enough to seem to be merely the instrument of the Pope, and humble enough to leave him all the glory and bear himself all the anger and

hatred. *Os tuum et caro tua sum.* A loyal servant. And Mariano Rampolla wished to remain a priest, and smiled compassionately when friend or foe called him a politician.

He must have smiled also when those who sought his favour greeted him as the successor of Leo. Such elevation is not for a Secretary of State who does his business, and, however Christian he be in sentiment, must make many enemies by his deeds and omissions ; certainly not for one who seems to be all-powerful, because he serves a feeble master, and because no one knows how stubborn an old man can be and how jealous of any man who extends his hand toward the helm. No : Rampolla will not succeed Pecci. If the cardinals gave their votes to a well-preserved man of sixty, they would have to abandon the hope of seeing three reigns, and the majority of them do not easily abandon that hope. Such reflections are silent in an evil time, and in their common need they turn to the strongest. Leo, however, left a secure estate, so that even pious simplicity might safely rule for a time. Even in the Conclave there is a good deal of the *rerum novarum cupido*, in which Joachim Pecci recognised a great power ; the strange and untried has more chance there than one who for a decade and a half has been familiar to the eye. " Rampolla Pope ? Why, he has been Pope since 1893." This witty reply of a certain dignitary hit the mark.

Then there was the wish once more to have a practical man on the throne ; one who knew the needs of the various dioceses from his own experience.

An army will rarely choose a commander who has for a long time been engaged in office, away from its practical work. This was more important than the question of the candidate's political faith. People who know nothing about it may dream that these astute princes of the Church cared only whether their candidate favoured Germany or France, and implored the blessing of heaven on the Triple or the Dual Alliance. Leo would have lived in vain if the man who stood next to his throne, and had received the impress of his will, together with the purple, were not convinced that the constitution and grouping of States change and the Church alone is eternally unchangeable. Empires may be rent in fragments and crowns broken over questions of interest. The aim is always the same ; the method has to be adapted to the spirit of the times. Gregory VII exclaimed to the Bishop of Metz that the power of kings came from servants of the devil who subjugated their fellows by robbery, treachery, murder, and every kind of outrage. It is a long time since Rome used this language, but its respect for the chance structures of a day has not increased in a thousand years, and there is still truth in the words of the poet : " From the Vatican, Empires, to say nothing of princes and peoples, seem small things lying at the feet of the clergy." Germany might spare its negotiations, and Austria its secret veto. Even without this zealous pressure Rampolla would never have been Pope. He was too young, too strong, too far removed from the common clergy and their prejudices. Who wanted to hear the *Gloria in excelsis* from lips

which could express worldly applause in the *salon* of Frau Friedländer of Breslau? Where the majority decides, the ablest has not much, the most accommodating has everything, to hope. Probably a fourth, and possibly a fifth, vote would have been taken if the illness of the Primate of Spain had not made the old prelates fear lest on the morrow they would have a corpse amongst them, and so accelerated the election. Even then, however, Rampolla would not succeed Pecci. "Pope? He has been Pope for ten years."

Giuseppe Sarto was the man of the majority; he was so plainly their man that he had been openly described in the Socialist *Avanti* as the heir of Leo. He was born of humble parents; his father had been a messenger and caretaker, his sisters were married to village publicans and shopkeepers. A good-natured, very orthodox man who did not approach Christian Socialism too closely and would hear nothing of reforms and modernisms. As Patriarch of Venice he lived very comfortably, though without pomp, liked his game, never offended anybody, and did everything that it was his duty to do. He had never been in the diplomatic service, spoke no foreign language beyond a little Church-Latin, knew no foreign country and hardly any province except his beloved Venice, was in his sixty-ninth year, and had a weak heart under his cushions of fat. *Ecce Sacerdos*. . . . Rumour crowns him at once. At Venice he had greeted the King and princes of the royal house (as all bishops did, when it was necessary, if their dioceses were not

part of the former Papal States) ; he will therefore soon make peace with the House of Savoy. He admires Germany, will take from France the privileges with which the eldest daughter of the Church has so long adorned her faded charms, and will release from the tyrannical yoke the spirits chained by the wicked Rampolla. A liberal Pope ! So they had once called Joachim Pecci ; he had, when he was bishop, received in his palace Gioberti, the enemy of the Jesuits, the apostate and Ontologist, had permitted a Mass of the Dead for Cavour in Perugia, had corresponded with Bonghi, and had always been on good terms with the secular authorities. A liberal, his friends said : his enemies called him a Jacobin. But Sarto is an entirely different kind of man. He is no politician ; he wears his heart on his sleeve, and is incapable of deceit. A really Liberal and God-fearing servant. And so this esteemed person succeeds the modern Pope who had, by long and quiet labour, adapted the most powerful organisation of human history to the needs of the times. For this untutored eye were the greatest treasures of art accumulated. Holy men chose him for their leader, beneath the sombre picture of the Last Judgment. Before him, as archpriest of the Basilica, the fine, cultured diplomatist Mariano Rampolla bends down to kiss his feet. And on the finger of Sarto, the tenth Pius, glitters the fisherman's ring, of which the papal jeweller Fanfani must take the measure immediately after the election.

“ Just like the old one,” thinks Bartolo, who has

secured a place not far from the *sedia gestatoria*. He is pleased with the figure and voice of the new master, but there will be even greater economy at the Vatican: The man who is born in a hut is never at home in a palace. The Sicilian who looks up so ardently to the throne, a thorough priest, a will-less implement in the higher hand, would have pleased him better. Yet has not Pietro told him how many Popes Hildebrand set on the throne before he occupied it himself? One must wait; his day will come. "The Pope fainted after the coronation." "He will not last long: Pius X is not Pio Nono."

Under the pontificate of Gregory XVII, when the first quarter of the twentieth century was drawing to a close, there was a hot and dry and disastrous summer. There was no rest for man or beast. Bad crops and pestilence afflicted the land, and the parching fever-heat seemed as if it would never pass. There was silence everywhere; even the gossips held their breath, as if they feared that if they spoke aloud they might attract to themselves the terrible horseman. Then from the coast there rang through the still and death-rigid kingdom an angry voice, like that of the preacher in the desert in his hairy coat. The people were summoned to penance and repentance and told that their frivolity had brought on the disaster. They had fallen away from the true faith and led a scandalous life on the sacred soil; not one of the shepherds took care of the flock entrusted to him. And the one who spoke

thus was himself a shepherd, a parish priest ; yet he spared nobody, dared to judge the prelates in their violet and purple, and sent his angry cry even against the glittering city of St. Peter. Your conduct, he moaned, is too worldly and too pagan. Where read ye that the disciples of Jesus dressed in brocade and girded their loins with jewels ? That they made a spectacle of themselves in gay-coloured raiment ? That they sat to luxurious feasts, and, like Asiatic idols, received the homage of their neighbours ? That they never did ; nor did the Master, whom they served in humility, but not as slaves. Go ye and do as they : be poor with the poor. The times are fulfilled ; and, unless ye decide on a speedy conversion, the generation of vipers will, at the command of the Most High, eat up the earth. And thou on the chair of Peter yonder, thou rock that shouldst bear the fabric of the Church, how dark are the depths of thy fallacious life ! Thy palace, with its swarm of drones, is like a whitewashed sepulchre, and all thy sterile activity is naught but bird-lime. . . .

No living man had ever heard such speech ; and what the courage of a martyr puts on the tongue is never said in vain. A murmur arose, and people gathered from all parts about the innovator, who was as calm, in his priestly garments, as confident, as if no power in the world dare cut even the ends of his hair. Prophet or fool ? Saint or heretic ? Yet he preached a pure doctrine, and there was nothing whatever in his words opposed to dogma. What had been promulgated should remain pro-

mulgated ; the Immaculate Conception, the Syllabus, and Infallibility must be respected as much as the oldest dogmas of the faith. The offence was given by the priests, not by the promulgation of dogmas, and it was therefore a painful duty to struggle against persons. Of what use is the hypocritical attitude of the servant when the clergy feast at the master's table ? What use is the formal cry of every one chosen, "*Non sum dignus*," when every one feels that he is worthy to hold the power of the keys ? And if he is asked by what deed he himself has been made worthy to judge princes of the Church, he must, more honestly than many of those who presented their feet to be kissed, say : *Non dignus sum*. The Lord may reveal Himself in the weakest vessel. Did not heaven vouchsafe him a sign of special grace ? Had he not the ring which the great Pope had worn until the last consecration ? When a Pontiff died, his ring was broken into fragments, according to an old custom. And this one ring alone survived out of so many. There it was : any man might see it or touch it . . . A miracle ! Assuredly this man was sent as a judge. He speaks wisdom, and blames only what all just men have long deplored. Hence the plague, bad crops, and famine. If they did but listen to him ! But the great men on the Tiber stop their ears, and no echo of his words penetrates the city. Yet the preacher rests not ; he stirs up the sinking flames, and with white-hot shovel feeds the fire. The murmur grows to a tumult, a howl ; it is as if mankind were crying for the last time in dire distress and a call

to the most bloody war must follow their frenzied prayer.

On the Tiber sits one who does not close his ears to the howl. He is the greatest of all. The crowd of monks, archbishops, and scarlet eminences beg him to put an end to the disorder. Let him bring before the ecclesiastical court this bold libeller and his forged ring, and order will soon be restored. Gregory only smiles, and no one can argue away this confident smile from his lips. Gregory knows men and the world. The age of trials for heresy has gone for ever ; the wise man must make use of every force, even such as has strayed into the wildest errors. No high-sounding indictment, no long procedure, no new page in the martyrology.

The zealot stands before the Pope.

“ So was I once. . . . And where is thy jewel, the magic ring which drew the crowds to thee ? It is genuine. I will not ask where thou didst get it. It is genuine ; and thou mayst keep it and believe in thy jewellery-miracle. The man who wore it had the courage, though he was an old man, to depart from the faith hallowed by the tradition of a thousand years. *Rerum novarum semel excitata cupido* : those were his words. He meant that even Rome must take account of this itching for novelty. It was the lust of novelty that fired the inheritor of the ring. Was it all new that thou, like a burning torch, didst flash into the souls of men ? It is the new that brings forth fruit. As to thee . . . thy Pope must live according to the teaching of Jesus, abandon all pomp, open his palace to the starving, and live a

poor life among the poor. Dost thou think that thou art the first to dream of such things? Dost thou not know that countless world-cursers and world-haters since the days of Bernard have delivered the same message? And art thou not astonished at that most marvellous of all miracles—that not one of them ever found a hearing? Not one of them, my friend, could find a hearing. Believe me, this cold parade does not warm me, and I would gladly go the thorny way in a linen smock instead of reigning here like a deity who is fawned upon to-day and frowned upon to-morrow. Thou art warm only in the love that thy fellows give thee. But we had no choice. What sufficed in Asia to keep together a race of men who believed that the end of the world was at hand does not suffice for a universe on which the last sun may not set for ages. Must we be like Peter? Where is Peter's community? Where on this earth is the paradise closed to the rich and enjoyed by the poor? The hungry kneel before new saviours and new crosses, and are lost to us, the lords of yesterday. Our followers would see the face of God, see His image in glory and pomp. For a thousand years the greatest minds have worked at this transformation of the Asiatic ideal, and until thou canst find something better, my son . . . Take thy ring. The drought won thee thy admirers. When the rain falls again on the soil, thou wilt angle in vain for the souls of men. Thy bait will bring thee no catch."

He smiles still: the compassionate smile of the intelligent pietist. It would take a Cimabue to paint for us this modern Pope.

WILLIAM II AND BISMARCK

THE story of the youth of the Emperor William is the story of his relation to a kingdom by the grace of God and his relation to Otto Bismarck, his servant and Chancellor, the genius in the service of the legitimate ruler. This dual relation was the fate of the youth of William II.

During eighteen years of the period which we must regard as the youth of William II it looked as if the manhood of Germany dreamed, somewhat late, and after their own fashion, Dante's dream of a universal monarchy. "The Emperor will rule absolutely alone," said Bismarck to Prince Chlodwig Hohenlohe. He attained his object. Any man who speaks or writes of German politics must, if he tells the truth, name the Emperor. Foreigners look to him alone; they attribute more freedom of action to a minister of the Tsar or a Chinese provincial governor than to a German Chancellor. From William's lips comes the answer to every question of faith or morals, culture or art. Is that a healthy situation for the Empire and the Emperor? William has sought it; and, because he sought it, the man who saw a grave menace to the Empire in this ubiquity of the monarchical power was bound to become onerous to him. Was it because the eagle drew him onward? Did

ambition dim the old man's eye? Did *he* wish to rule alone?

On April 21, 1890, Frederick of Baden said, two days after the Emperor had spoken to Chlodwig: "It was a question whether the Bismarck dynasty or the Hohenzollern dynasty was to rule." Earlier still, on June 22, 1888, the Empress had declared to Frederick, in the presence of the same trusted statesman, that "Bismarck had ruled undisturbed for twenty years and could not bear to find a will in the monarch." The Empress was badly informed. Chlodwig might have corrected her statement from his own experience, but he was too prudent to offend high dignitaries by contradicting or instructing them. Bismarck never had an unrestrained power; he had always to reckon with the stubborn will of the monarch, and he had often suffered through the old man's obstinacy. Count Saint-Vallier, to whom he once unburdened his heart, has recorded the following sentences: "I think a great deal of the Emperor; I am wholly devoted to him, and have spared neither health nor strength in his service. Yet he is constantly giving me ground for disagreement and puts the most painful obstacles in my way. I should get on much better without the letters which he is always sending me. He has a noble nature, but he is nervous, opinionated, and prejudiced. He does not know himself to what influences he is exposed; I feel them, without always knowing whence they come, and I am wearing myself out in struggling against them. I have constantly, like Penelope, to begin again at the

beginning. My patience is tried very severely, and I often fear that my nerves will not stand the strain."

In those words we feel the indignation of an overburdened mind. He may have thought of these sighs, which sound like complaints, when he afterwards wrote : " I was far from having any personal sensitiveness in regard to the Emperor ; he could act more or less unjustly toward me without causing me any feeling of anger. I should no more have thought of having a feeling of being injured by him than I would have done in my paternal home. That did not prevent me from passively resisting him, or struggling against him with a kind of nervous energy, in important political matters for which I found that he either had no understanding or some preformed opinion which was due to Her Majesty or to sectarian or freemason intriguers at the court. Looking back calmly on that struggle to-day, I dislike and regret it, just as one looks back with regret on moments of dissent after the death of one's father." Decisions on both large and trivial matters had to be wrung from the monarch. The talk of court-servants had little effect on him, as he was a cautious man ; but he could never lay aside his anxiety lest the passionate nature of his minister should bring some peril upon him and the country. He nearly always yielded in the end, because he could find no solid ground to resist in vanity. He neither wished, nor needed, to be brilliant ; he was the King. His personal vanity was satisfied with the consciousness that his instinct

had always given a correct reply on the vital question of the army. He would never have settled on his own initiative the policy of Prussia, still less that of the Empire, and would never have given a promise, however loosely worded, to a sovereign or an ambassador behind the back of his minister. He knew what a treasure he had in Bismarck. He was proud to know that every crowned head in Europe envied him such a counsellor. He was not ashamed to recognise his superior intelligence and riper experience, and even the rights of his genius, and to follow his lead. When the Chancellor begged leave to withdraw, he said : " Can I blame myself in my old age ? " He was always the master. " He had," writes Bismarck, " the royal feeling that he did not merely tolerate, but felt himself elevated by, the thought of having a distinguished and powerful servant. He was of too high a nature to have the feeling of a nobleman who could not endure the presence of a wealthy and independent peasant in the village." He spoke of the unveiling of the national monument on the Niederwald as " the keystone of your policy, a festival that honours you above all." And when Bismarck had completed his twenty-fifth year of service as a Prussian minister, he received from his " eternally grateful King and friend " a letter (the last but one), the second paragraph of which ran : " A luminous model of true patriotism and untiring industry, often at the price of your health, you have been indefatigable in meeting the formidable difficulties of peace and war and overcoming them, and in leading Prussia to a position

of honour and glory in the history of the world of which none had ever dreamed. Such achievements cause us to greet your twenty-fifth year with a feeling of gratitude to God that He placed you by my side in carrying out His will upon earth. This gratitude I offer again to your heart, as I have so often done." That was the feeling, expressed in the simple language of a child, of the true man who now, at his nephew's command, is acclaimed, in blind and deaf obedience, as William the Great.

He would have smiled if some courtier had warned him against the Bismarck dynasty. For him there was no such thing as rivalry. That he remained a King, and became an Emperor, he owed to his minister. He it was who bore the double burden of the work and the responsibility to the nation and to history ; but far above him was the throne of the King, and no angry cry, no arrow, could reach that height. That more was said about the Chancellor than about the Emperor was in the natural order of things, and was not inexpedient ; the main thing was that Prussia and Germany went ahead. Dynasty ! Did the Chancellor wish to bequeath the power he had won ? Never was he so foolish as to entertain such a wish. As he found no other suitable assistant, he admitted his son to office ; gave him a place for which Richthofen and Tschirschky have since been found good enough, and a salary which Chlodwig regarded as insufficient for himself. He never hoped or wished that Herbert should be his successor. He did not think it possible. Dynasty ! The father earned at least a hundred

and twenty thousand marks a year in his office, and paid his son about thirty thousand, and both laboured honestly. When the prince requested the appointment of a military adjutant (which is part of the staff of every Chancellor since 1890), the military cabinet refused permission: three times in succession. In the most trifling personal questions he encountered difficulties which it often took weeks to overcome. Augusta, Victoria, and Louisa, the mistresses of the three chief courts which had influence at Berlin, were against him. He had not a single friend on the General Staff. No sick-chamber was prepared for him, as for the fourth Chancellor, in a Hohenzollern palace. He did not, like that illustrious minister, travel by special train.

It is true that the world spoke of Bismarck's policy, not of William's. Must we on that account speak of a Bismarck dynasty? Was the splendour of the crown diminished because the nation held him, and not the King or Emperor, responsible for the Kulturkampf, the Protective Tariff, or the laws against the Socialists? The saviour of the Hohenzollerns was not treated as a lackey; neither was he treated as the head of a dynasty. He had staked his head and his honour for the King, when all others timidly drew back, and he proved his fidelity and personal devotion a thousand times over, in storm and sunshine, in adversity and prosperity. He could hardly expect that German princes would accuse the creator of their Empire of dynastic ambition, and reproach him with having worked ill for

the house of the Hohenzollerns. William II and his great-uncle have done that. Perhaps they would again have found his reply "coarse." But he had no need to speak. He had but to lay before them the letter in which his King said to him : "In memory of your silver wedding you will receive a vase representing a grateful Borussia, which, however fragile its material may be, will nevertheless tell in every fragment what Prussia owes you for the high position it has attained." Thus wrote the grandsire, the victor in three bloody wars. He was proud of his great servant, and did not grudge him space. The grandson would rule alone.

When Mazarin died, officials and courtiers asked Louis XIV : "Who will now show us the way ?" and received the reply, "I." Gratitude had disposed the King to submit to the masterful will of the cardinal. Louis was only twenty-three years old when death removed his dominant minister. Later he said : "I do not know what I should have done if he had lived longer." What ? He would simply have borne the yoke longer. Unless some one had maliciously whispered in his ear : "There is the deathly enemy of thy greatness, thy fame : thou art no King as long as this shadow falls on thy throne."

Such a one came early to William : that astute hole-and-corner strategist, Count Alfred Waldersee. All are agreed in their verdict on this officer. Bismarck said : "Waldersee is a confused politician with whom one can do nothing ; his statements

are worthless. He wants war because he feels that he will be too old if the peace lasts much longer. It is stupid to think that Waldersee could be Chancellor of the Empire. Even as Chief of the General Staff he is unsatisfactory." The Emperor said: "Bismarck and Waldersee cannot endure each other, but are united in a common hatred of Caprivi, whom Bismarck would overthrow. They do not care what follows." (This amiable belief was wrong. Bismarck was never united with Waldersee, and never spoke a single intimate word to him. He said to me: "I would not let the man cross the threshold if he were not in the company of the Emperor. When he visits me, I always have the feeling that he is reflecting whether the time has not come for bringing a suitable wreath.") The Emperor's mother said: "Waldersee is a false and unscrupulous man who would not hesitate to ruin his country if it were of advantage to his personal ambition. The Emperor Frederick did not trust him and regarded him as false." Yet at that time the worst part of his conduct had not come to light. He is a figure to which you will find no equal in the history of the Prussian army: a pious assassin out of the pages of some criminal novel. He never attained his high aim. He was unable to wait; was always trying to warm his budding aspirations by lamplight, in order to bring them to ripe attainment the more speedily. But he was the right man for those who were associated with him in 1888. He severed the future Emperor from the first Chancellor and he showed himself a better strategist in

the early stage of the campaign than he had ever done on the field of battle.

“Trust not princes, who are like balances ; the one who cries ‘Hosanna!’ to-day will cry ‘Crucify him!’ to-morrow.” With this quotation Bismarck might have closed his account of the events which led to his dismissal. It is taken from an ancient hymn, which was sung at evening prayer in the house of the pious General, Leopold von Gerlach, after the days when Frederick William IV was unjust and ungracious. “Of their truth,” said the prince, “I was only convinced at the beginning and the end of my political career. The old master was reliable. You can scarcely imagine how rare a thing a gentleman is in this sphere. He was one : a knight of the old school, a Prussian officer. A real nobleman, in the best sense of the word, not one who thought that, owing to some special private relation to the Lord, he was dispensed from observing the old maxim, *Noblesse oblige*. I had seen a good many things before (personally I had little cause for complaint of the poor King, who was interested in my political education ; he tolerated my roughness very graciously) ; and what I afterwards experienced myself. . . .” Any one who reads the diary of Hohenlohe must conclude that the conflict between the Emperor and the Chancellor began about three months before the retirement of Bismarck. This is wrong : like almost every other conclusion based on the statements of that profoundly false and selfish man.

“Cave : adsum !” was written on a photograph

which the twenty-five-year-old Prince William of Prussia sent as a birthday present to the sixty-nine-year-old Prince Bismarck : " Take care, I am near you." The Chancellor showed the portrait with a laugh. " Thou scarcely knowest how rude thou art, my friend. This youth believes himself more formidable than he is. But, like Mephisto, I am consoled to think that there is wine in the end." In December 1887, he recommended the ninety-year-old Emperor, whose son had been given up by the physicians, to have Prince William gradually introduced to State affairs. It was not easy to persuade him. The Emperor was silent for a time, and then said (in the last letter he wrote to the Chancellor), on Christmas Eve : " I entirely agree in principle, but it will be very difficult to carry it out. You must know that the very natural decision to which I came, on your advice, to allow my grandson W. to sign the current documents of the civil and military cabinet in my absence, with the clause, ' By supreme command,' greatly irritated the Crown Prince, as it looked as if people in Berlin were already thinking of his being replaced. My son will be appeased on quiet consideration of the matter, but he will be disturbed again if he learns that his son is allowed to have an even greater insight into State affairs and to have a civil adjutant. . . . I should therefore advise you to retain the customary form of initiation to the treatment of affairs. That is to say : let him be attached to the various ministries of State singly, or possibly to two of them, as during this winter, when my grandson has been free to



Photo

THE EMPEROR WILLIAM II

T. H. Voigt

visit the Foreign Office and the Treasury ; this permission may be discontinued at the new year, and perhaps the Ministry of the Interior chosen, though my grandson should be advised to orientate himself in foreign affairs in [illegible] cases. This continuance of the actual custom will be less irritating to my son, though you will remember that he was sharply opposed to this procedure. I should like to have your opinion on the matter."

We see the weariness of hand and brain. Even here, when there was question of a matter of domestic policy and the head of the house was free to decide, the old monarch was content to make a proposal and ask Bismarck's view. Bismarck could not resist. The Emperor's letter was not six months old when the grandson became Emperor of Germany and King of Prussia. Whose place should it be to initiate him into affairs ? The Chancellor's, of course ; he was always more esteemed than any other uncrowned individual by the prince. Prince William, Chlodwig writes, is "a rather irresponsible young man ; his mother is afraid of him, and he is even in conflict with his father at times." This went on, and the parents complained to the Chancellor. When, in the ninety days, there were differences of opinion, Crown Prince William was always on Bismarck's side ; he alone had authority with him. He seemed to be as devoted to him as a grateful pupil is to his master. Seemed ? There were those who had other hopes. The old Emperor still lived, when General von Heuduck, a supporter of Waldersee, said to Chlodwig : "There are signs

that the prince, if he becomes Emperor, will not long tolerate Bismarck."

Yet this group was certainly wrong. On April 1, 1888, the Crown Prince William was Bismarck's guest, and spoke thus: "To use a military phrase, I regard the present situation as I would a regiment advancing to storm. The leader of the regiment has fallen, and the second in command lies dangerously wounded. At this critical moment forty-six million loyal German hearts look anxiously and hopefully to the standard and the man who bears it, of whom they expect everything. This standard-bearer is our illustrious prince, our great Chancellor. May he continue to lead us! We will follow him. Long may he live!" Bismarck requested that the wording of the speech should be altered for official publication ("because it seemed to me improper to praise me at the cost of the suffering Emperor, who had just then shown, in the Battenberg affair, the bravery of a martyr"), but it was not. The Crown Prince had said: "The great Chancellor leads and we follow." And the Crown Prince was the heir of the doomed Emperor.

On April 4 Bismarck hands in, at the Charlottenburg Palace, the memorial in which he says that he must ask leave to retire if the Princess Victoria of Prussia is married to Prince Alexander of Battenberg. The Crown Prince is in daily consultation with the Chancellor (to whom, after the birthday-speech, the Emperor Frederick gave an unflattering description of his son in a violent letter). On April 10 there is an armistice at Charlottenburg; the

Empress is in agreement with the Chancellor on questions of money and property-rights; she is "enchanted" with him. In the meantime the Ambassador, Sir Henry Malet, moved by the anti-British campaign in the Press, has written to Queen Victoria that the anger of the Germans against British interference will increase if Her Majesty makes any notable effort to press the marriage. She arrives on April 24, and receives the Chancellor on the following day. She declares for him, against the Empress. The marriage is dangerous politically: the daughter must not, as wife of the German Emperor, simply allow herself to be influenced by a feeling for her homeland. It is very reasonable and energetic. In the end she reconciles (with the help of Frederick of Baden) the Crown Prince with his mother. At the end of May the Puttkamer-crisis becomes acute. A week after Puttkamer's retirement Frederick dies; and the man who will follow the great Chancellor becomes Emperor. (On Bismarck's advice he abandons his intention of recalling Puttkamer, but presents him with the Black Eagle.)

On the last day of July the Emperor, who has returned in good spirits from Russia, Sweden, and Denmark, visits the Chancellor, and remains the night at Friedrichsruh. "On that occasion," the prince said afterwards, "the Emperor showed almost exaggerated consideration. He thought it too much that I had awaited him until eleven at night. In the morning I was still washing, half naked, when he came and asked me not to put on

my uniform on his account, and helped me into my house-coat. Politically also he was in the mood of the young graduate, who wishes to know nothing of people over thirty, but makes one exception: The first old man whom I found reasonable! But it did not last long."

How long? Thirteen days after the conversation in the bedroom the Court-Chaplain, Stoecker, wrote to Wilhelm von Hammerstein: "We must light faggots round the political centre, the cartel, and make them blaze, and throw the prevailing optimism into the flames in order to illumine the situation. If the Emperor sees that any one is trying to sow discord between him and Bismarck he draws back. If you feed his dissatisfaction in things in regard to which he is instinctively on our side, you confirm him in principle but do not move him personally. He has said, in a word: 'I will give the old man [Bismarck] six months to recover his breath, then I rule alone.' Bismarck himself has observed that he has no hold on the Emperor. We have to be careful, therefore, and keep our eyes open." We: not the high-conservative party or faction, but the crowd, the members of which are for various reasons fighting for Alfred Waldersee. The latter had already whispered his cunning and flattering assurance: "Your Majesty's glorious ancestor would never have been Frederick the Great to his people if he had tolerated the omnipotence of his minister." Since August 10, 1888, he had been Chief of the General Staff, and (as Hammerstein said) "stuck to Moltke and Albedyll like a

king of the rats." But he cooked his food at every fire he could reach. Having married the widow of a prince of Holstein, an Augustenburger, he had the right to address the Empress as a niece of his wife. The Emperor sees him every day, walks with him in the Thiergarten, and wishes to take him, instead of a representative of the Foreign Office, on the voyage to the North Cape. The Waldersee-Stoecker-Hammerstein trinity need only help a little: "cautious, without pressing." Bismarck is a feeble Ritschlean, a tepid Laodicean, and coquets with the Liberal opponents of the true faith. In internal politics his great resource is the cartel, the contents of which are prejudicial to Christianity and to Monarchical and Conservative interests. As a diplomatist he over-estimates the value of our treaties, courts an understanding with Russia because he feels too old for a war, and forgets that Germany is strong enough to meet any coalition single-handed.

One reads something of that sort every other day. Has it any influence on the Emperor? Certainly. He praises the moral and spiritual strength of the court chaplain. The Chief of the General Staff has his ear. The "old man" has now only four months "to recover his breath." The astute Bleichröder (not always treated by Bismarck with proper discretion) groans: "What is there to prevent these gentlemen from beginning again the old game and saying to the Emperor: 'You are really only a puppet—Bismarck is the ruler?' That sort of thing had not much effect on the old Emperor ;

the young man is more impressionable." However, the effect is not yet visible. The Emperor desires the publication of the first report on the diary of the Crown Prince Frederick. He takes Count Herbert with him on his journey to South Germany, Vienna, and Rome. On October 29, he spends the night again at Friedrichsruh. ("He made me talk for nearly three hours, so that I was frightfully tired, and showed his most amiable side. My wife could not say enough of the liveliness, naturalness, and modesty of his behaviour.") On the last day of December he writes: "Dear Prince,—The year that has brought us such grave afflictions and losses is drawing to a close. It fills me with joy and confidence to reflect that you remain loyally at my side and enter with renewed strength upon the new year. With my whole heart I wish you happiness, blessing, and, especially, constant good health, and hope to God that I may long be spared to work with you for the welfare and greatness of our country." When this letter arrived, it was just a year since the Emperor and Chancellor had conferred as to the best way to initiate Prince William into State affairs. Bismarck knew well that it would not be easy to work with the new master, but he had promised not to shirk his difficult task. (Augusta wrote to him at Christmas 1888: "You have been loyal to our unforgettable Emperor and answered my prayer that you would care for his grandson.") He would do his duty and give youth its rights. He supposed that he would die in harness.

It still looks as if he will. Chlodwig (always fond of playing the *camarilla*, even forming a connection with Herr von Lucanus, although the man's engaging smoothness could inspire little confidence) tries, on January 21, 1889, "discreetly" to turn the Emperor against the regulations demanded by the responsible military authorities and passed by Bismarck, but must note: "The Emperor was silent and could not be induced to express an opinion. I saw that he is completely under the influence of the Chancellor and will not venture to say anything at variance with Bismarck's view." That is a specimen of the tone. Because the Emperor, who has mounted the throne only four months previously without any training for his work, adopts what the highest military and civil authorities hold to be necessary, he is to be blamed for lack of courage and independence. "So I had to abandon the attempt to induce him to change his mind on the point."

In league with Chlodwig are the Empress Augusta and the Grand Duchess Louisa (he "reassures these great ladies as to the future"). On January 25, however, the Grand Duke of Baden remarks that "it is not impossible that the Emperor will quarrel with Bismarck, if he notices that he is not told everything; at times he would avoid it all, as he needs Prince Bismarck for military matters." Chlodwig finds that the Chancellor "gives one the impression of not being quite sound in mind." The last few months had brought on the Samoan trouble, the opening of the criminal proceedings

against Geffcken, the conflicts with the Royal Niger Company and the Englishman Lewis, who was troublesome to the German authorities in South-West Africa; serious matters which had been decently settled, but which had no showy results. On February 16, Waldersee takes the oath as member of the Upper House. On April 1, the Emperor calls for him before he goes to Wilhelmstrasse to congratulate the Chancellor on his birthday. (The present, a mastiff, had been found by Boetticher.) During March Bismarck had frequently been summoned to confer with the Emperor. The Grand Duke of Baden had visited him twice, and settled with the Emperor the question how long a cuirassier remains capable of service. All this leaks out. When he speaks in the Reichstag for the old-age and sick-insurance measure, the Chancellor says: "I think that the public Press over-estimates my political enemies when it says that I am growing old and approaching the end of my power of working. I can still do something, though not all that I used to do. If I can successfully attend, in my old age, to the foreign affairs of a great country, I am doing what is considered in other countries to be a full man's work, and an important work. If I succeed in carrying on our foreign policy in harmony with our allies and His Majesty the Emperor, and yet enjoy the confidence of other Powers, I think I may regard that as my first and most important duty. In all other matters it would be easier to replace me. But I cannot bequeath to another the amount of experience that I have gained in about thirty

years' work as Foreign Minister." He cannot bequeath it. A father who desired his son to succeed him would not have spoken thus.

Was there any reply to the speech of the "rapidly ageing Chancellor," or any attempt made to reserve foreign affairs for his province? Something, at least, is made of the speech at the court. The allies are mentioned in it before the Emperor; the Chancellor need only be "in harmony" with him. There is not a word about his duty of obedience. Then there is the expression of a proud feeling that he is irreplaceable in international politics. "Listening to him, you would think that we were bound to stick in the mud if he got down from the box. He does not care what part he assigns to the Emperor in saying this. And, if you look closely into it, you see that he is depreciating the old Emperor in his grave." The proof? "I claim for myself the first word in the whole of our social politics; I succeeded in gaining the interest of the Emperor William for the matter." It is true. "Your very prudent work," the first Emperor had, in a letter to the Chancellor, called his messages of 1881 and 1882. But was it right to say it in public? How correct we are. It is high time that people are accustomed to the Emperor's control. There is a conference every other day: an audience or a royal council. In April, General Verdy du Vernois is appointed Minister of War for Prussia; against the wish of the Premier, and at the recommendation of Waldersee, who wishes to have a confidant in the ministry and honourably

remove a possible successor. Still there is no open conflict.

In May begins the strike of the Westphalian miners. On the 18th the Chancellor speaks in the Reichstag. (Does he suspect that it is the last time? He allows himself to be photographed in the anteroom.) He does not conceal the fact that he is on bad terms with nearly every party; he is not even sure of the Conservatives (to whom Hammerstein has announced the coming fall of the patron of the cartel). From the 21st to the 26th King Humbert is in Berlin with his son and Crispi. The Emperor sends the Italian Premier a photograph with the inscription: "A gentilhomme gentilhomme, à corsaire corsaire et demi." Crispi thinks that he is characterised as a pirate and runs excitedly to Wilhelmstrasse, where he is assured, with some difficulty, that the words merely mean that the Emperor regards him as a gentleman. On the day of the departure of the Italians there is a Royal Council. The strike, which seemed to have been ended, had begun again. The Emperor had received the Delegates, Bunte, Siegel, and Schröder, at the palace a fortnight before, and said that he would proceed with inexorable rigour "if Social-Democratic tendencies were admitted into the movement." In the Royal Council he speaks very stiffly against the owners of the pits. "If these wealthy people will not listen to reason, I will withdraw the troops; if they then find their houses in flames, it will not be my fault." Bismarck replies that, in accordance with Prussian tradition and the constitution, the

protection of the State is not to be refused to wealthy people ; they had, in any but a Socialistic community, an indefeasible right to settle the conditions of labour according to their convictions. The Emperor was mistaken in praising the "patriotic feeling" of the Delegates he had received and in commending them, since they were "decided Social Democrats," for "refraining from any sympathy with Social Democracy." The Chancellor feared a fresh abuse of the imperial confidence, and must, though he considered that the state of siege adopted was not yet necessary, press for energetic protective measures. Even while he was speaking, he felt that he no longer had the support of all his colleagues, but dare not show it. The Emperor left him in a bad mood. One anxious dignitary wrings his hands and says : "If your Excellency had only told him that in private !" Answer : "Do you want me to play the part of leading eunuch in the Royal Council ? There would be no object in that, and it would merely be a waste of time. I cannot sacrifice my honour and reputation to His Majesty." Four days afterwards Hagemeister was summoned from Westphalia and replaced by Studt in the higher presidency.

In June the conflict with Switzerland is the main theme of political conversation. Even Conservatives say that the Emperor blames the Chancellor for his brusque action. The Grand Duke of Baden is "embittered against Bismarck ; even Herbert says that he cannot understand his father, and many begin to think that his mind is failing. The Emperor

will win confidence if he now puts in a strong word and ends the conflict. Bismarck is now only influenced by egoistic motives. He does not want another war ; hence he is making all sorts of advances to Russia, and at the same time inspiring articles against Austria and confusing people." On these remarks of the Grand Duke Chlodwig observes : " It is possible that the next thing will be a conflict between the Emperor and the Chancellor. That would be bad."

Bismarck goes to Varzin, the Emperor (with Herbert) to England. On August 11 they are both back in Berlin, and have long conferences. On the following day Francis Joseph comes, with the heir to the throne, Count Kalnoky, and his sectional chief, Szögyenyi. The Emperor of Austria visits the prince, with Francis Ferdinand, and sends him a marble bust of himself. On August 14 Herr von Szögyenyi asks whether Bismarck is prepared in principle to consider the question of a commercial treaty with Austria-Hungary ; it is politely, and firmly, declined. Both Emperors had desired this treaty. On the 20th the Chancellor goes to Friedrichsruh. On the 23rd Chlodwig sees the Emperor and Frederick of Baden at Metz, where a monument of William is unveiled. The Grand Duke says : " The vacillation of the Chancellor [between Russia and Austria] has puzzled the Emperor, but increased his self-confidence ; he notices that something is concealed from him here and there, and is distrustful. There has already been a conflict between the Emperor and the Chancellor [at the Royal Council],

and we must regard it as possible that the Chancellor will go. But what next? The Emperor thinks, probably, that he will control our foreign policy himself, but that is very dangerous."

Waldersee, to whom Chlodwig communicates his fears, as he does to every dignitary he meets, advises not to press the purchase of Russian property; a good deal may happen in two years. "It seems to me as if he were hinting at an impending war with Russia." Beginning of the Press quarrel between the Chancellor and the Chief of the General Staff (who has special diplomatic reports sent to him from St. Petersburg and Paris, and, as custom entitles him to do, gets von Holstein to read to him everything that interests him in the Foreign Office). Bismarck's journals make fun of "politico-military undercurrents," which threaten to disturb the peace, and mutter something about a memorial submitted to the Emperor, recommending a preventive war against Russia and representing, with an appeal to Clausewitz's "Theory of War," that the Chief of the General Staff should be merely the technical military assistant of the statesman who is responsible to the nation and the Emperor, to whom must be reserved the final decision on all questions of vital interest to the nation. To the Chancellor? The final decision, it is whispered, really belongs to the Emperor. Bismarck's opponents circulate a stupid pamphlet which recommends Herbert as the future Chancellor, and although it annoys the prince, is neither officially nor unofficially condemned. There is, then, really question of a Bismarck dynasty

Hammerstein violently champions Waldersee (who has lent him a hundred thousand marks) in the *Kreuzzeitung* and opposes Bismarck's cartel policy ; but on October 2 he is threatened with the displeasure of the Emperor in the *Reichsanzeiger*. Herr von Rauchhaupt writes him : " You ought not to try to treat the Emperor with cake and the whip, as you have clearly done. You have encouraged his absolutist tendencies, because you thought you would bring him into conflict with the National Liberals." That was wrong. " What we have to do is to strengthen him in his Conservative ideas. The rest will follow of itself."

From October 11 to 13, Alexander III is in Berlin. Long conversations with Bismarck, who replies confidently in the affirmative to the question whether he will remain in office. After an audience lasting an hour and a half the Chancellor goes to the gala-banquet and (for the last time) to the gala-performance (*Rheingold* and *Koppelia*) at the Opera House. When the Tsar has gone, the Emperor accompanies the Chancellor to Wilhelmstrasse (Bismarck never told me that he kept the carriage in front and let the prince get out on the street) and told him, radiantly, as they went along, that he has pledged himself to return the visit during the manœuvres at Spala. Bismarck raises objections ; the interval between the visits is too short, and there is scarcely accommodation at Spala for so distinguished a guest ; Alexander must be treated prudently and not made suspicious by *trop de zèle*. (Herbert had made similar objections to the idea of visiting the

King of Italy again in his capital.) The Emperor loses his radiance, and returns to the palace in a bad humour. Two days afterwards Waldersee goes to the Chancellor's house to show how useful the journey to Russia will be. (At this period something is done on advices from St. Petersburg. Are they favourable or unfavourable to the idea of a visit? Herbert seems here to have followed, however unconsciously, a different policy from that of his father, to whom it seemed necessary to submit these unfavourable advices precisely at this time. In spite of Holstein's warning they are not submitted.)

The Emperor (who has said in a speech at manœuvres that the false method of teaching history is the cause of the growth of Social Democracy) goes with Herbert to Monza, Athens (for the marriage of his sister Sophia), and Constantinople. On October 26 Chlodwig is in Baden-Baden with the Empress Victoria. "She dislikes the Emperor's excessive travelling and regards the journey to Athens (which, as I heard from Princess Betsy, has ruined the Greek court) as unnecessary." The Grand Duke of Baden complains of Bismarck, and says: "'The Emperor has the prince up to here.' As he said this he did not draw the line at the neck, as is usual in making an expression of that kind, but at the eyes. The Emperor does not want to break with him as long as he needs him for the settlement of military matters. After that he will not keep him." On the same day Bismarck receives from the Emperor at Athens a telegram which closes

with the words : " My first word home is greeting to you from the city of Pericles and the columns of the Parthenon, the noble spectacle of which has made a deep impression on me." Other gracious telegrams followed, from Constantinople and Corfu. On November 7 : " After a stay that has been like a dream and has seemed paradisaical owing to the generous hospitality awarded me, I went on in fine weather through the Dardanelles." The General Staff party, for which Herr von Tausch plays the spy and Herr Normann-Schumann works abroad, grumbles at the publication of these " private " telegrams, which only go to show what youthful feelings the monarch still has and how much he is attached to the prince. Two days after Herbert's return Eugen Richter asks in the Reichstag whether the General Staff opposes the policy of the Chancellor, as one would gather from inspired articles. Herr von Verdy makes a zealous defence of Waldersee, and Herbert " cordially " accepts the explanation of the Minister of War.

It sounds like a farce. Are they abandoning the struggle ? Bill Bismarck goes to Berlin and warns his brother : " If you can't kill the man, it would be better to leave him alone ; the sort of thing that is happening is a comedy." Herbert has to speak a good deal in the Reichstag, and rarely speaks with effect. The National Liberals also now discover their claims on the masses. Miquel delivers a funeral oration over old times, sees (in an after-dinner ecstasy which his colleague Hanse-mann finds unbearable and " only intended for

attachés”) a new force rising, and charms the Emperor, who praises him (at Potsdam, on December 11) in Chlodwig’s presence. He also blames the municipal administration at Berlin. “They will act in such a way at Berlin that the Social Democrats will have a majority. They will then plunder the citizens. To that he is indifferent; he will have loopholes for rifles made in the palace, and see how the plundering goes on. Then the citizens will call on him for assistance.” On December 14 Chlodwig is at Friedrichsruh, in order to gain Bismarck’s influence for Werki. He politely declines. We cannot interfere in internal Russian affairs. It is improbable that war impends. Waldersee is a confused politician; he is pledged to reciprocity with Verdi. Russia would not be ready for five years at least (needing new weapons, railways, &c.), and we need not move until the status of the Austrian monarchy is threatened. Chlodwig, who holds that he is “not quite sound in mind,” is extremely grateful to him for permitting the visit and advising to buy Russian property more freely. Bismarck is warned of intrigue at Berlin, but says, with a smile: “These things can do me no harm.” Count Bill says that he met General von Caprivi at the station at Hanover; he wished to make a quiet visit to Berlin, but hesitated when he saw that he was recognised by the Chancellor’s son. There is no harm in his purpose. The work with the new master, who “would prefer to be both Emperor and Chancellor,” occasions some strong remarks, but it must be done in the interest of the Empire.

Finally, the Emperor has declared himself against the hyper-Conservatives and in favour of the cartel policy. The letter which he sends to the Chancellor at the new year praises Bismarck's share in the "provision for the artisan population," and closes with the words: "I pray God that he will spare me for many years yet your loyal and experienced judgment in my difficult and very responsible task."

The struggle now rages precisely about the question of the workers. On January 12, 1890, Stumm hastens to Friedrichsruh. The Emperor, he says, has ideas (on the popular side) which will, if they are carried out, paralyse German industry in competition with foreigners, and give occasion for a fresh growth of Social Democracy. If this plan is realised, there will be "red" elections. The prince alone can save the Empire from this peril. "We take our stand behind you." Herbert also laments that the outlook is bad; the Emperor wants to settle every detail, orders the Secretary of State, who has spent half the night at his desk, to submit the latest telegrams and advices to him in the very early morning, and then directs at once how everything must be arranged; such a system leaves no room for the quiet consideration which should precede every decision. It is another bad feature that His Majesty so often deals privately with envoys. The harassed son has not been altogether discreet in his criticism of the Emperor's conduct, and the small men of Wilhelmstrasse (Nos. 74, 76, and 77) have long kept a hopeful eye on the "authoritative future." Herbert did not know this, but found it

necessary that "some one should speak seriously to the Emperor."

He (von Holstein) is again warned: "Be careful that disagreeable things are not said to the Emperor in the presence of witnesses! He will not forgive that; and he, as King of Prussia, is stronger than any minister." It is too late. On January 24 the prince returns to Berlin after three months' absence. A different wind is blowing from that of October. The creatures have learned to tremble. Herr von Boetticher, who is otherwise indefatigable in the service of the master, says 'Yes' to everything now and stands aside; no longer raises objections. Bismarck arrives at midday; is there from three to eight—sitting of the Cabinet, audience with the Emperor and Royal Council. He seems still to have the ascendancy in the Cabinet; there is at least a majority in favour of maintaining the Socialist law. (The Emperor, who trusts soon "to have done with" Social Democracy, is not in favour of maintaining it.) At the sitting of the Royal Council Boetticher reads the socio-political declarations which the Emperor intends to publish. Bismarck is unable to agree; he has grown too old in the individualistic school of economy to prohibit the work of women and children and Sunday labour. He talks of the bad effect on the elections, and, as the Emperor has said that the effect may and will be excellent, ventures to say that this optimism is only possible to young men who have had no experience and outlived no illusions. The debate lasts an hour and a half, and its undertone is at times

quite shrill. In the matter of the Socialist law William does not succeed. "Even if my intentions are thwarted here by the decision of the majority. . . ." The Minister of War, who, as a General, has sided with the Emperor, tells him after the sitting that Bismarck has communicated with the departmental chiefs and attempted to turn them against the monarch's view.

On the last day of January the prince is (at his own wish, in view of the irreconcilability of opinions) relieved of the office of Minister of Commerce. As his successor he has "by way of information" recommended Herr von Berlepsch (whom Herr von Boetticher and Herr von Rottenburg had long wished to bring into notice). On February 3 he brings to the palace the paper which he has prepared, recommending recourse to the State Council and an international conference. Once more he gives a warning, and begs permission to throw the paper in the fire. The Emperor shakes his head vigorously: "I expect a good deal of this." The paper is published without the Chancellor's countersign. (The Emperor has said to Chlodwig: "Bismarck tried to induce Switzerland to stick to their conference, but this was defeated by the loyal attitude of Roth, the Swiss Ambassador at Berlin." Bismarck told me that the Emperor summoned Roth to the palace at night, and urgently pressed the Swiss to forego the right of priority, but said nothing to the Chancellor of the matter. I heard the same from Ludwig Bamberger, who heard it from Roth.)

On the evening when the *Reichsanzeiger* published

the memoir, without Bismarck's countersign, William attended the parliamentary dinner at the Chancellor's. The latter said: "I make no impression on the Emperor: you try your luck." On the following day Stumm comes with a promise of "unflinching loyalty"; the Socialist law must be maintained, and industry must be protected from the baneful influence of the memoir. On February 8 a circular letter is sent to the German missions, protesting that only by international combination can the workers obtain protection. "The working classes of different countries, seeing this state of things, have established international relations which aim at the improvement of their situation." The international organisation of workers is recommended as a model to Governments. And in the speech with which he opens the State Council, on February 11, the Emperor speaks of the "arbitrary and unrestricted exploitation of the strength of the workers." Stumm and his friends are dismayed, but decide, when they have recovered, to stick to the monarch through thick and thin. The prince is disgusted and says that he would like to be relieved of his charges. William does not try to dissuade him.

On the 10th Bismarck is with Schuvalov; he would like, before he retires, to see the German-Russian Treaty renewed, in order at least to protect international politics from surprises. On the 20th are the Reichstag elections. The Conservatives, the Imperial Party, and the National Liberals lose heavily; the Social-Democratic vote is almost

doubled. There had previously been eleven Social Democrats in the Reichstag ; now there are thirty-five. It would be cowardly to retire now ; a change of Chancellor after this election would be an open acknowledgment of irreparable defeat. Bismarck (whom Count Limburg-Stirum finds in "a high-elegiac frame of mind" at the time) points freely to the effect of the memoir, as he had foretold it, and declares that he feels bound to retain office for some time. "That was not agreeable to the Emperor, but he made no objection," writes Chlodwig. Meantime the question of Bismarck's successor had been repeatedly discussed with Caprivi ; General von Albedyll had refused the place. On March 5 the Emperor makes a speech at the festival dinner of the Brandenburg Provincial Landtag, which closes with the threat : "Those who oppose me in my work I will crush." It was hinted everywhere, and sometimes said openly : "That is a reference to Bismarck."

The prince was not always in a "high-elegiac mood," but even in these grave times ready to enjoy Low German humour. He called for Reuter's *Stromtid*, and read out the chapter which describes the removal from office of the old inspector, Hawermann. "I have no more to say : I am in a scrape : I am too old for the young man." "Herr von Rambow has so ordered things, and he keeps to his horse in the Haidberg, and superintends and directs everything." "He has a telescope in one hand and a marshal's staff in the other, like old Blücher on the Hopmarket at Rostock." There

is no grief: no wincing at the rumours that reach him. That Frederick and Chlodwig think him no longer normal in mind we have already seen. The suspicion that he took morphia was now started (by Boetticher, Bucher says). The Emperor asks Schweningen, and receives the answer: "That is a miserable calumny, and I know the source from which it comes." (Schweninger only gave the prince narcotics on very rare occasions down to the last day of his life; as a rule he gave him pure water labelled "morphia," and put him to sleep by suggestion.) Bismarck hardly realises what the moles are doing; on the very day of his retirement he considered Boetticher as his successor.

There is no more rest for him. He wishes to protect the remainder of his sphere of influence against the intrigues of his colleagues, and control the intercourse of the Ministers and Secretaries of State with the Emperor; he is impatiently resisted. The monarch demands the abolition of the Cabinet order of September 8, 1852, which was intended to secure for the Premier a rigid control of affairs. "If the King wishes to alter this situation, he must be his own Premier; indeed he already discharges the duties of the office." Such phrases prove nothing, it is said; the prince should submit a full and impartial memorial on the subject. The International Conference is opened on March 15. In private conversation the Chancellor calls it "a great phraseology," and the Emperor hears this. On the 17th Bismarck is twice officially requested to at once send in his resignation. He writes it

on the 18th, because he learns from Herr von Hahnke and Lucanus that this meets the wishes of the Emperor. Thirty-six hours afterwards he reads the following words in the handwriting of His Majesty: "The reasons you give for your decision convince me that further efforts to induce you to resume your office would have no prospect of success." No such efforts had been made.

General-in-Chief the Duke of Lauenburg received "inextinguishable gratitude," and on March 29 "a funeral of the first class." Bismarck's one predecessor, Freiherr von Stein, had been dismissed with visible signs of disgrace. Because in the interest of the State and the Crown he had ventured to resist the royal intentions, Frederick William III had written to him: "I have been compelled with great grief to see that I was, unfortunately, not deceived in you at first, but that you are to be regarded as a refractory, obstinate, and disobedient servant of the State, who, relying on his own genius and talents, and far from keeping in view the good of the State, has been led by caprice, and acted from passion and personal hatred and bitterness. State servants of that kind are just the men whose conduct is most prejudicial to the harmony of the whole. I am extremely sorry that you have forced me to speak to you so plainly. But as you profess to be a lover of truth, I have expressed my feeling in plain German, and will only add that, if you do not regard your disrespectful attitude toward others, the State can make no claim to your further services." Even Treitschke, who has made so zealous a defence

of this King, has to write : "Accustomed from his youth to the companionship of mediocrities, he never overcame his dislike of able, shrewd, and extraordinary men. He was afraid of the high and uncalculating courage which distinguishes the great German." He recalled the fate of Stein when, after the year 1890, he spoke of "the ingratitude of the Hohenzollerns," the "unpleasant hereditary defect of the ruling house, from which Frederick the Great and Emperor William I alone among Prussian Kings were free."

Any man who sees a fault in the dismissal of the Chancellor by the young Emperor cannot acquit William's great-uncle of his share in it. Grand Duke Frederick of Baden was a good ruler. Conscientious, modest, shrewd in his business, he lived long and peaceably. It was only in his last three decades that he often sought occasion for oratorical effect ; and he then spoke almost as a crowned and somewhat unbalanced Bennigsen. Bismarck long regarded him as an enemy. He believed that the Grand Duke was displeased that Alsace was not given to Baden in 1871. That would have given him a nice little kingdom. There is, however, no proof of this ; all that we know of Frederick's letters since that date tells against Bismarck's suspicion. His hostility may have had other grounds, such as differences in general views. Son-in-law of the Empress Augusta, liberal, always inclined to listen to public opinion, an optimist with a confident faith in the goodness, truth, and beauty that dwell in the heart of man, he was, nevertheless, especially

in his old age, very mindful of the dignity of the prince, who has received special rights and duties by the grace of God, and no one who was not born in the purple must indulge any levity in his presence. A man of such views and sentiments (yet was never proud) might easily take offence at Bismarck's awkward manner.

The first Chancellor did not fear his enemy; indeed, he was not even angry with him. He laughed when some unfriendly saying of the Grand Duke was reported to him, and said: "Now he is showing antipathy." He said to me in 1891: "If you want to form some idea of the man, you must think of Auerbach's novels. 'On the heights'—that expresses him fairly well." The works of Ottokar Lorenz and Chlodwig Hohenlohe ought to have taught him to appreciate better the power of the Grand Duke. As long as the old Emperor lived, Augusta herself, the "firebrand," could do nothing of importance. When Bismarck complimented her in William's room and the same evening made the uncourtly remark that she ought "to spare the impaired health of her husband and not expose him to contradictory political influences," she allowed him to remain, but vented her anger in the phrase: "Our most gracious Chancellor is very ungracious to-day." Even Frederick of Baden could do little in those circumstances. His time came in the summer of 1888. In May he was the intermediary in the Battenberg affair. (The Empress Frederick had persuaded her husband, who was seriously ill, to telegraph for Prince Alexander of

Battenberg to come to Potsdam. The betrothal to Princess Victoria would then be announced at once. The plan, the execution of which had had the effect of a battle-cry at St. Petersburg, was frustrated by General-Adjutant von Winterfeldt, who felt it his duty to show the telegram to the Chancellor. It was not sent ; and, after a conversation which began harshly but ended sweetly, the Empress was "enchanted" with Bismarck.) Soon afterwards, however, the Grand Duke speaks of the possibility of an impending conflict between the Emperor and the Chancellor, as early as January 1889. He speaks with increasing bitterness of Bismarck, and does all he can to drive the offender out of office. For this we cannot blame him. In his opinion (which he may have expressed to the Emperor, as both use the same words in speaking to Chlodwig) it was a question "whether the Bismarck dynasty or the Hohenzollern dynasty should reign." The answer to this could not be in doubt. Frederick believed that the affairs of the Empire would do better without Bismarck, and we cannot dispute his right to the error. But in that case why did he visit the lion in his den ? Why did he make a farewell visit to the man whom he had fought as a danger to the Empire, and never regarded as a trustworthy royalist and loyal servant of the Emperor and King of Prussia ?

Hohenlohe observes : "He said that he entered and told the prince that he had come to bid him good-bye and to say that he would always gratefully remember the time when they had worked together

for the good of Germany. The prince then said that it was the fault of the Grand Duke that he was going, as the support given by the Grand Duke to the labour-protection legislation had contributed to the breach between the Emperor and himself. The Grand Duke disputed this, pointing out that it was Prussian affairs that had caused the difference of opinion to culminate in a breach, and that he had never interfered in Prussian affairs. At this Bismarck became rude (the Grand Duke did not tell me what he said), and the Grand Duke arose and said that he did not like this ; he wished to leave him in peace and would only express a sentiment in which he knew Bismarck would concur, 'Long live the Emperor and the Empire.' With that the conversation ended." Can we trust Chlodwig's accuracy ? He makes the Grand Duke play a curious part, since he was partly responsible for Bismarck's retirement. He had foretold and desired it. And is it true that Prussian affairs only had led to the breach ? On March 26 Chlodwig writes : "The Grand Duke of Baden said yesterday that the cause of the breach between the Emperor and Bismarck was the question of power, and that all other differences of opinion, on social legislation and other matters, were secondary." Further, was this question of power due only to the Cabinet order of 1852, which is still in force ? It is hardly credible. Nor is it easier to believe that the Grand Duke would use conciliatory language, when Bismarck had been rude, and propose the toast of the Emperor and Empire. There are two old men alone in a

room : the Chancellor is rude : the Grand Duke replies : " Join me in saying, ' Long live the Emperor and Empire.' " As remarkable a scene as one could imagine. Silence were better, Chlodwig ! His chronicle says, in fact : " The Grand Duke expressed his especial satisfaction at the retirement of the Chancellor. Had the Emperor yielded on this occasion, he would have lost all authority, and everybody would simply have looked to and obeyed Bismarck. That could not be tolerated. The article in the *Hamburger Nachrichten* made him very angry ; he called it infamous." Yet he regarded Bismarck as the author of the article. It amounts to this, then ; as a German patriot he rejoiced at the retirement of Bismarck, had wished for it, thought it urgently necessary in the interest of the monarchy, and ascribed infamies to the retired statesman. But in the chamber of this statesman he plays melodrama !

Bismarck described the farewell visit (not to me alone) in very different terms. " That I was not in a very good mood at the time you will quite understand. I had not expected to be put out of doors after thirty years of service in the ministry, and I knew that the Grand Duke had more than once advised the young monarch to dispense with me. If he had said it openly to me, we might have come to an understanding. But he thought it his duty to adopt a gracious tone with me, especially as everything had been done for some time behind my back. The visit itself I was to regard as a last proof of favour. In the circumstances, I should

have found it less painful to meet a declared enemy. When he spoke to me about our common work, my nerves were a little strained. All honour to the patriotic services of His Royal Highness ; but our shares in these matters were not quite equal. And when I heard him regret the premature breach, my old enemy, face-ache, came on, and, in these accumulated unpleasantnesses, I broke all courtly tradition and remarked that His Royal Highness had, if I was correctly informed, helped to bring the Emperor to this breach, and I could not therefore conceal my astonishment at his sympathy. The Grand Duke arose, took his helmet, and went out of the room without a word." That sounds more credible, more human, than Chlodwig's theatrical account.

People who were in a position to know said afterwards that the Grand Duke regretted his conduct and would like to see the Chancellor back in office. That may be an invention of pious loyalty. It remains an unhappy fact that the honest man and brave prince who represented Germany on the throne of Baden was not great enough for an hour which should have been his greatest. Even if he had a hundred reasons for anger, he ought to have allowed for the mood of the Chancellor. He should have said to the grandson of his wife : " Thou hast a long life before thee and this man is old. Learn to bear with him. Thy ancestors learned it. Realise, for three or four years at least, that he understands everything, small and great, better than thou, since thou hast no means of comparison,

and that he always weighs the consequences more surely. He will then be nearly eighty, and will himself wish to retire. Use him, as long as thou hast him ; thou wilt never find such another teacher. He is not an ordinary minister. But for him thou wouldst not be Emperor. If he had not risked everything in 1862, thy grandfather would have lost his throne, no one would have ventured to open the question of United Germany, and thou wouldst rule to-day, at the most, over an Anglicised Prussian State. Thou shouldst not ask of him more than the old King did ; not ask him to mind his place and be one among thy councillors ; not be surprised if he does not tell thee all his plans. Thou art young and impetuous, and canst not easily keep by thee what satisfies thee. Thou draggest into politics a sentimentality that has no place there, and raisest feelings of loyalty that find no echo. Thou hast seen only sunny days, and, being a rich heir, knowest not how uncomfortable a seat a throne is in a storm. He has led wisely for twenty-eight years, and knows every pitfall that threatens us. Let him run on until he falls, and try only to draw out his finest art. Thou hast time ; thou wilt stand at his grave, and canst then enjoy in peace the right of the survivor. If thou findest it hard to wait, read the letters which thy grandfather wrote to him, and console thy pride with the knowledge that it is a glory for a young ruler to have a minister whom his neighbours envy him." Thus might Frederick of Baden have spoken. He was initiated, and had seen evil days ; and at that

time William did not close his ears to his great-uncle. But Frederick of Baden said: "It was just a question at the bottom whether the Bismarck dynasty or the Hohenzollern dynasty was to reign." He spoke as if he were speaking of a petty dictator of the German who had done more for the house of his kings, for the monarchy and dynasty, than any other man in living memory.

"That the public opinion of the democracy is content to see me go does not surprise me much, in spite of manhood suffrage and the raised standard of living. But that princes should cast me aside as a piece of useless furniture is an experience for which I was not prepared." He gradually adjusted himself to it, dictated quietly the story of his last years of service, and had a kindly greeting, as if he had parted from them gracefully the day before, for the distinguished persons who came, somewhat shyly, to visit him in the Sachsenwald. Yet not one of them had moved a finger for him; not one had asked whether there had been proper consideration before it was decided that he should retire. Not one out of the whole number. They felt that they moved more freely now that the genius was no longer in their light.

Nearly every writer has a different theory of the motive of young William in forcing him to retire. The Grand Duke of Baden says: "The breach occurred over the question of power. All other differences of opinion, on social legislation and other matters, were secondary. The chief cause was the Cabinet order of 1852. Even the conversation with

Windthorst would not have led to a breach. One might add the Emperor's distrust of the prince's foreign policy. The Emperor suspected that Bismarck conducted his policy according to plans concealed from himself (the Emperor), and had an idea of abandoning Austria and the Triple Alliance and coming to an understanding with Russia, whereas the Emperor will not have this, and adheres to the Alliance." General von Heuduck says: "The Emperor informed the Generals in command why Bismarck had gone. The question of the Cabinet order and the intemperate way in which he opposed the Emperor made it impossible for him to work any longer with the prince. Russia wanted a military occupation of Bulgaria and the neutrality of Germany. Bismarck wished to abandon Austria. The Emperor was determined to adhere to Austria, even at the risk of war with Russia and France." Caprivi said: "Bismarck had concluded a treaty with Russia by which we guaranteed Russia a free hand in Bulgaria and Constantinople, and Russia bound itself to neutrality in case of war with France. I have not renewed this treaty, because if it had become known it would have ruined the Triple Alliance." Herr von Holstein says: "Bismarck's plan of abandoning Austria would have brought on us such contempt that we would have been isolated and dependent on Russia." The Emperor says: "Bismarck wanted to submit again to the Reichstag the Socialist law, with a threat of dissolving it if the law were not passed, and then, if there were riots, to proceed vigorously. I opposed him.

If my grandfather had been compelled, after a long and illustrious reign, to proceed against insurgents, no one would have taken it amiss. But I should have been accused of opening my reign with shooting my subjects. The bitterness was increased by the Cabinet order of 1852. The visit of Windthorst to the prince also gave rise to unpleasant talk, but was not decisive. It was a quarrelsome time, and the real question was whether the Bismarck dynasty or the Hohenzollern dynasty should rule. In foreign politics Bismarck went his own way, and concealed from me a good deal of what he did. I recently asked Herrfurth, who was present at every sitting of the Cabinet, whether during the whole time I did anything that might hurt Bismarck and give him cause to go against me. He replied that, on the contrary, all the ministers were surprised at the patience with which I tolerated the rudeness of Bismarck."

I have always opposed the way in which Bismarck, who was daily insulted by the Social Democrats, conceived and would dam the social movement, and, although I did this with my hat in my hand, my opposition led to a whole year's interruption of my valued intercourse with the prince (it was resumed owing to a kindly expression of Bismarck's). Any man who has read Bismarck's speeches, especially those delivered in the eighties, will find it impossible to believe that he lacked intelligence for socio-political matters. Often enough men of the Manchester school have accused him of a leaning

to Socialism and Communism. It is to his credit that even the poorest now has a vote, and that Germany led the world in legislation for the protection of the workers; the merit is his alone. But he was born in 1815; he never saw the large industries of modern times, and could not have done anything great without the gift of intuition. His rapidity of conception and association was always unintelligible to less gifted minds; but what he had not seen at close quarters was always foreign to him. (For instance, England, the Colonies, the Asiatic peoples, large industries.) He wanted to see the power of the State strong to make use of it, and he was too heavily burdened with a care for the security and future of the Empire to turn to theories, Utopias, and untried experiments. He might have come to an understanding with Lassalle, but not with Marx and his followers. He would never believe—he discussed the point during many a walk with me—that the Social Democrats were not longing for the day when they could carry a revolution, disarm the State, and leave it a prey and a mockery to foreigners. Otherwise, what was the meaning of their whole apparatus? Why an army of a million and a war-chest with constant contributions? In fact, they say it themselves. Must we wait until they are strong enough? The longer we wait, the more blood will be shed in the end. We are new as a Great Power in Europe. We are in a very difficult position and must not expose ourselves to the danger of a revolution and the anarchy it entails. Our young industry also must not be so burdened

with such costly duties that it cannot compete successfully. Those were his leading principles. His advisers were Stumm and other captains of industry, who took a paternal care of their workers, but would not sacrifice their paternal rights. Their knowledge and success impressed him; more at least, than those of Bebel and his friends, whose political aims he regarded as childish and beneath discussion. A Socialist Republic (if such a thing were possible) between Russia and France! And the belief, worthy of schoolgirls, that they would graze together as peacefully as lambs! . . . One must also take into account the treatment he received from Social Democrats. He was an ignorant fool, an adventurer, a forger, a scoundrel, a criminal. After Lassalle's time he scarcely ever heard anything else from the Social Democrats. And that he was a man, with the weakness and sensitiveness of a man, we hardly need to be told by Hohenlohe.

It is tragic to reflect that the creator of the Empire, the statesman to whom the German worker owed far more than to all the Church-fathers of Marxism and all its organisers and agitators, fought against a phantom and had no clear star before him. But we must not turn the tragic into a criminal romance; not act as if there were a bloodthirsty monster plotting at Berlin, Friedrichsrüh, and Varzin, to take the lives of the people. (I believe that such monsters are rare; that any ruler gives the order for sanguinary repression with heavy heart; that the order is often due to ignorance; but that the

right to repress risings in the interest of the State is at least as indisputable as the right to arm the masses against the abuse of power. It is only in the minds of children that every revolutionary is a splendid hero, and every general who leads the troops against insurgents a Nero or an Alba.) Bismarck would sanction "shooting" only when the *ultima ratio regis* was the only thing that could secure order. What the Emperor says to the contrary is untenable. It does not matter, in such circumstances, whether the ruler is young or old, famous or not famous, and whether he is applauded or blamed. He has to heed the dictates of his duty and royal conscience, and pay no attention to his desire of applause. William's example, also, is incorrect. His grandfather was a young man when he was "forced to proceed against insurgents"; before he ascended the throne he was known as the "grape-shot prince," and he was more bitterly cursed by the democracy of Prussia than Muravieff or Trepoff in Russia.

For the understanding of the quarrel in 1890 psychological considerations are more important than those of theoretical politics; they were for Bismarck himself. Had the Emperor read the signs of the weather more correctly than the Chancellor? He says: "Very soon the Social Democrats will be plundering the citizens; that is nothing to me; I have loopholes made in the palace and watch the plundering, and wait until the citizens call for my help." He therefore intended to "order shooting," only somewhat later; and he regarded the Social

Democrats as robbers. Why did he oppose the Chancellor? To Bismarck it was certainly not "a matter of indifference" if the citizens were plundered. He would not wait for that to happen, but was ready to offer State-protection to every class. Later he said: "There was a good deal of talk about the Socialist-law and the memorandum, but I knew the youth well enough to be sure that the engine of the special train would not long run on that line. And then? When the inevitable disillusion came, the direction would be changed at once, and full steam would be put on to make up for lost time. I never learned to engage in this kind of politics. I have never coquetted with the masses. We saw in the years of conflict how mischievous it is to offend the *bourgeoisie*. The young master had no experience, and was daily surrounded by Byzantine courtiers who were bound to strengthen, and did strengthen, his self-consciousness. It was impossible for me to put aside my conviction as if it were a worn-out shirt, even in order to retain favour and office. What they wanted to do, immediately before the election, was Cæsarist politics, and, in my opinion, of the type of Louis Napoleon. I could have nothing to do with it." He was not prepared, like Caprivi, to bring about a catastrophe after pluming himself on his "cold-blooded temper"; nor, like Chlodwig, to crown an easy life with the proposal of the Lex Heinze.

Bismarck might say to-day: "When William II came to the throne, the Social Democrats polled 763,128 votes: after he had reigned for fifteen years

they polled 3,025,000 votes." He might point to all the speeches in which the Emperor has since inveighed against the Social Democrats and charged them with the gravest criminality. Rightly or wrongly, he refused to be influenced by the thirst for popularity, or the desire to retain office, or the thought of personal advantage. Would he suffer, would his income suffer, if the workers in the great industries received higher wages and shorter hours? He did what his conscience and conviction bade him do; he put his name only to documents of which he approved the contents. He did this in spite of disfavour, in order that he might not have to despise himself as a coward. Even his embittered opponent had to admit that. Where is the man whom the Emperor will find equally upright to-day in time of pressure? We have not seen one since the retirement of Bismarck.

As to the Cabinet-order of September 8, 1852, what Bismarck said of it in his farewell visit shows with luminous clearness the exact nature and consequences of the change that was desired. The Premier is responsible for the whole policy of the Cabinet. He can only meet this if he is able to ensure a unity of will and action in the Cabinet and control its intercourse with the King. He cannot meet it if every head of a department may, at a favourable moment, without first asking the opinion of the Premier and his colleagues, obtain directions from the King. In the year 1889 certain ministers had got the ear of the monarch and had come to the Cabinet with the project (their own or that of

Privy Councillors) favoured by him; they were triumphant, as they had the King's signature, which must silence all opposition. In order to stop this practice Bismarck recalled to the mind of his colleagues the order of Frederick William IV. It is countersigned by Manteuffel, and directs that the head of a department must consult on all government regulations with the Premier; if these regulations need the royal acceptance, the report of the departmental chief must go first to the Premier, who may annotate it and will present it to the King; if a head of a department wishes to confer with the King he must announce this intention early enough for the Premier to be present, if he thinks it necessary. William regarded these directions as obsolete. The farewell visit, at which bitter and wholesome truths were told to the King, gives the reply: "In an absolute monarchy such a direction as that contained in the order of 1852 would not be necessary, and it would not be necessary to-day if we returned to absolutism, without ministerial responsibility. But since the constitutional provisions have become law it is essential that the Premier should control the Cabinet in the sense of the order of 1852." We now have the letters which Frederick William IV wrote to his Premier, Ludolf Camphausen. They show us what the situation was before September 1852, and what the King wished. He writes: "For the King a constitutional ministry shall and must be a deliberative assembly. It shall and must advise the King. That is to say, each minister shall and must express his opinion and view in the Council.

Then the one difference under a constitutional régime is that the King's word is no longer definitive, but the King's view is discussed, before him and with him. Never, in any circumstances, shall a settled matter be submitted to the King which the ministers may not discuss further, but which he alone is compelled to discuss with the Cabinet as a collective person. What an undignified and unroyal attitude I had to assume yesterday and the day before in the presence of you all! That may do very well with a weak-minded monarch like Ferdinand, but not with Frederick William of Hohenzollern, King of Prussia. . . . Your unbiased will must be mirrored in mine, come to an understanding with mine, and be able to listen to it." It is therefore not a question of ministerial decisions which the King accepts, or, if he desires to change his advisers, rejects, but of a discussion of the several ministers, hampered by no decision, with the King, who then easily wins weak minds to his own side. That was the object in May 1848. And in January 1890, a King of Prussia says: "If my intentions are to be thwarted here by decisions of the majority . . ." And a little later he says to a leader of the Conservative Party: "Mark you, *suprema lex est regis voluntas*." The order which Bismarck was to abolish is in force to-day; and no Prussian King has been so difficult and so rarely accessible to heads of departments as William II.

Then there is Windthorst's visit. On March 14, 1890, the leader of the Centre Party had, through Gerson von Bleichröder, requested an interview, and

Bismarck had appointed the same day for it. It pleased him that an intermediary should be sought ; in fact he received every deputy who wished to discuss affairs with him. Boetticher's blind friend did not need to go on his knees to obtain that. The conversation had no result of any political value ; what the Catholic wanted (the *status quo ante* 1870) the Protestant was not prepared to yield. Bismarck spoke of the possibility of his retirement. Windthorst pressed him urgently to remain in office ; but if he *must* retire, the best man to succeed him was General von Caprivi. His visit must at once have been told to the Emperor. By whom ? Certainly by an intimate friend, who wished at the last moment to discredit Caprivi's candidature on the ground that it was supported by Bismarck. The prince never believed that Windthorst wittingly lent himself to the intrigue. Since Hatzfeldt had gone, Boetticher and Holstein were next to the aged banker. He had been useful to the Secretary of State in the Stralsund family matter ; the Privy Councillor appreciated the old man's shrewdness and brain-power. It can be proved that Herr von Boetticher hoped to conduct the State's affairs together with Herbert. It cannot be proved that he reported Bleichröder's visit to the court, but there is some evidence of it.

On the fifteenth the Emperor makes a very early visit to Herbert's house and sends for the Chancellor. He has been very busy on the previous evening and has before him the tiring day of the opening of the Conference (together with visits,

audiences, &c.), and is still in bed. In his later years he was always slow at rising; the physician ordered it. Everything had to be done punctiliously. He had to take exercise and have various ablutions; Schweninger was brought in, and examined the various organs and their functions, even in unpleasant detail. Nervous men are especially inclined in the morning to protect their eyes from the excessive brightness of the outer world. And this man was seventy-five years old, and had done years of hard work. However, he hurried from bed to his wash-stand, and into his clothes, to meet the Emperor, dispensing with the little aids with which his physician used to prepare him for getting through the day.

“Disappointed, no reckoning made, but sent to my account with all my imperfections on my head”; in these words of the Danish King—he always had his Shakespeare in mind—he afterwards laughingly described the issue to me. William excitedly requests him never in future to deal with leaders or parties without his knowledge. “I cannot in my old age sacrifice my right to receive influential parliamentarians in my rooms for informing conversation, and should find it difficult to have my intercourse controlled.” “Not even when your master enjoins it?” “The power of my master ends at my wife’s salon.” After a few sharp words the conversation passes to the 1852 order. He is told to annul it at once. So the Premier shall no longer have the rights which Manteuffel thought indispensable in 1852. The Chancellor shall not

be able to control the intercourse with members of the Reichstag as he thinks fit.

That was the issue of the conversation which Bismarck, in his farewell visit, calls "the fateful conversation of the fifteenth of this month." The Emperor himself would admit to-day that he was wrong. He might have quitted the prince as ungraciously as his ancestor had dismissed his minister, but he had no right to treat him as a hired servant on account of a trifle (Windthorst's visit), as if he had upset the sauce on the table-cloth. He was not treated as a minister and Chancellor—not even as the man of whom in 1852, four months before the birth of the famous order, Frederick William had written to Francis Joseph: "Herr von Bismarck-Schönhausen belongs to a noble stock which has been established in our marches longer than my own house and has, especially in him, given proof of its virtues down to our own time. We owe the preservation and improvement of our flat lands to his energetic exertions in the bad days of recent years. He is my friend and loyal servant." He was the true servant and friend of the monarch, of the King and Emperor William, and had done one great thing for the House of the Hohenzollerns—obtained for it Charlemagne's crown. What would it have taken to make the old master summon the Chancellor from bed and speak angrily to him! The grandson did it.

He afterwards complained bitterly that Bismarck was so violent that morning, and said: "The only thing one can say is that he did not throw the ink-pot at my head." This was not said humorously, as I

still supposed in 1903, but seriously, in presence of the commanding generals, to whom he described the conduct of the Chancellor in such terms that Moltke, the leader, summed up their verdict : " If the man can forget himself in that way, he must go." Bismarck, who made no cowardly denial of his conduct, nevertheless maintained that he did not fail in respect. When the ink-pot story, the origin of which was then obscure, spread, he sought an explanation. It was not hard to find. When the prince spoke with spirit, he was in the habit of making short, but strong, raps on the table, as if he wanted to impress his words on the wood ; possibly this would cause a drop of ink to jump from the ink-pot. Herbert said that there was no ink-pot in the room where the conversation took place. It does not matter. William demanded more respect. Any man who thinks the prince capable of ruffianism and threatening with physical violence does not understand him. The giant who attached so much importance to " good breeding " was not vulgar ; he was simply unreservedly truthful. He stood before a king as one nobleman stands before another. When, at his first reception in Sanssouci, he blamed Frederick William for deserting the capital, and the Queen, angry at hearing him adopt such a tone, cried out that the King had not slept for three days and was blameless, he answered quietly : " A king must be able to sleep," also to hear hard truths. He had not in his blood a single drop of courtly servility and dog-like humility. He would never like Caprivi, have deferred talking about an important

matter because "the Emperor is not in a good mood to-day." The man who wishes to be served by a genius must not look for the manners of a lackey.

The next point is his relation to Russia and Austria. The treaty which Bismarck wanted to conclude with Russia in 1890 has never been published ; any man who told its provisions would incur a suspicion of endangering the interests of the Empire. (Bismarck himself considered the question of including it, at length and with comments, in the third volume of his reminiscences.) Was it a question of renewing the assurance-treaty, or were there fresh provisions ? Officially, we know nothing about the matter. Until March 20, 1890, only four persons at the Foreign Office were acquainted with the outline of it ; the Prince and Herbert, the Under-Secretary of State, Count Berchem, and the envoy von Schweinitz. Even Herr von Holstein was not admitted to the deliberations, as he was regarded as prejudiced in Russian affairs ; but, as the chief worker and best official in the political department, he knew what was agreed upon and must have read the secret documents. The statements of Chlodwig, which are based on the remarks of William, Frederick, Caprivi, and Holstein, betray a complete misunderstanding of Bismarck's policy, its deepest motives and ultimate aims ; they show, in fact, an intentional misunderstanding and a wish to obscure matters.

Russia, the Emperor told the Generals, wants a military occupation of Bulgaria and asks us to be neutral. Did Waldersee tell him that ? Was he

certain, or guessing? William was firmly convinced that Boulanger would be Emperor, predicted for Alexander III, whom he thought lazy, the end of Louis XVI, and called the heir to the throne, Nicolai Alexandrovitch, "an intelligent man, who would follow quite a different system"; in other words, he erred in very human fashion. No treaty was needed in 1890 to assure Russia that Germany recognised its right to "a predominant influence in Bulgaria," and would not support any Power that disputed their right. They knew that at least from January 11, 1887, ever since Bismarck had said in the Reichstag: "It is a matter of complete indifference to us who reigns in Bulgaria and what becomes of Bulgaria. We are not going to quarrel with Russia over this matter at anybody's request." Eleven years before he had declared that Eastern questions were not worth the bones of a single Pommeranian musketeer to us. Here, then, is the first defect in the long list of his sins. The Russians did not need in 1890 to treat for what had been assured to them years before and had no vital interest for the German Empire.

But, further, who wished to occupy Bulgaria at that time? Possibly Ignatiev's Slav Benevolent Society, but certainly not Alexander or Giers. It is possible that they wished to strengthen their position on the Dardanelles; in that case Austria might wait until England made a move. Bismarck knew from Schweinitzen's report of December 14, 1889, that Russia dare not contemplate any important war before 1895 on account of the dearth

of means of transport and arms. He did not doubt that Ferdinand would hold his hand and come to an understanding with St. Petersburg, because "a Coburger always takes his time." But he also knew that Russia, precisely because it was deficient in arms and backward with the strategically most important railways, feared an attack at this time on the part of Austria on account of its helplessness, and wanted some security against any such attack. The Russians were to be certain that Austria would be isolated if it attacked (as the English Cabinet would have nothing to do with such an attack except on very imprudent provocation), yet not forget that, if they attacked they would find Germany on Austria's side. This guarantee of peace was Bismarck's aim.

That was not the only thing that he expected. His opponents (the Emperor among them) accused him of "vacillation." He has answered from his grave: "International policy is a fluid thing; in certain circumstances it may become solid for a time, but changes in the atmosphere cause it to return to its original condition." Ever since 1870 there was danger of a Franco-Russian alliance; Nicholas I even had declared it a necessary consequence of the union of Germany. It had to be prevented. France alone we were prepared for, but were we prepared for both? Hence France might take what it wished in Africa—Tunis, Morocco, and even more; it would then have enough to occupy it for several generations, and need not keep staring at the Trou des Vosges. Hence also Russia

might weaken itself by satisfying its appetite for the Balkans (taking a bit of Constantinople has never yet done anybody any good), but must not touch the Austrian life-centre; in that case we should have to intervene. As Austria, if it found itself exposed single-handed to a Russian attack, would have to seek allies in the west (and might find them after Kaunitzen's fashion), he concludes the German-Austrian treaty, within the bounds of the agreement of the three Emperors in 1879, against the very strong wish of the Emperor William. He takes advantage of the divergence of Austrian and Russian interests in the Balkans.

Was there not still a danger of our being involved in Eastern affairs? In 1886 the distinguished statesman proposes to the Eastern Powers an understanding on the Balkan situation; almost on the lines traced later by Lobanov, Aehrenthal, Lamsdorff, and Goluchowski, and revealed in the Mürtzsteg programme. He does not succeed. He finds, however, a rapid Slavonisation of Austria and its consequences, and a growing discontent among the Germans, especially in Bohemia and the Alpine regions. He says to himself: This Slavic Austria can hardly make war on Russia; yet the Habsburg-Lorraine house cannot wish, because it does not want to lose its German territory, to see our prestige and attractiveness increased. What is more likely, then, than a Russo-Austrian understanding at our cost? If it becomes a reality, France will be the third partner in the alliance, and probably Italy the fourth; and England will soon join any strong

coalition. The old duck-hunter looks for a new decoy and finds it. If the Russians are so foolish as still to fear an attack on the part of this Slav State with a crumbling German façade, we may take advantage of its fear. The German-Austrian treaty was possible within the bounds of the alliance of the three Emperors ; a German-Russian treaty is equally possible within the limits of the new Triple Alliance. But, it is said, the former was communicated to the Russians and the latter concealed from the Austrians. That is a distinction for pious boys. Amongst Bismarck's favourite phrases was this : "There are no such things as mysteries." Do we know, moreover, what he said to Kalnoky, and how long the new treaty would be unknown at Vienna ? Would it frighten the Viennese ? It protected them from Russian attack and did not put an end to their hopes in the Balkans.

"William wanted to keep faith with Austria, Bismarck to break it." Ought one to be angry or to laugh when he reads such a statement ? What did the Emperor do for Austria ? Nothing : there was nothing that he could do. The honouring of the "noble sons of Arpad" and the duel-telegram are on the debit side of his balance ; on the other are the most zealous movements of goodwill and the decision (inevitable in the interest of the German Empire) to help Habsburg against the trust of those who would encircle it in the Bosnian dispute. And Bismarck ? At Nikolsburg he fought against the King, Moltke, and all the generals with his last nervous energy, when he was stricken with a painful

illness ; threw himself into convulsions on his bed in the camp ; threatened suicide ; demanded permission to retire ; and at last secured the abandonment of the war (" as my Premier deserted me in face of the enemy .") and of the attempt on West Saxony, saved Austria from a grievous wound, and kept open the possibility of an alliance. And, in order to convert this possibility into a reality, he had again in 1879 to make a hard struggle with the King (after Alexander II had, in violent letters, threatened his uncle with war). If it had depended on the Hohenzollerns, Austria would have bled freely, and become the friend of all our enemies. Bismarck had a use for this pawn on the European chess-board ; he could not make use of it in any smaller proportions. Nor did he want to " abandon " it in 1890. He wanted merely to give it no more (as many wanted on the Danube) than was provided in the Alliance-treaty. He was not to be moved either by Austrian or Russian interests. For binding itself to remain neutral in the Turkish war, Austria was rewarded, in the Reichstadt Convention, with Bosnia and Herzegovina. Bismarck had not given the Russians either a promise of increase of territory or of neutrality beyond what German interests had long given it and was a matter of public right ; yet he secured from St. Petersburg a written assurance that in case of an attack by France we might be assured of their benevolent neutrality. Whence could the storm come then ? In case of a Russian attack we have Austria, which is again secured for us if Russia weakens. France is alone, and may occupy itself

with new colonies on England's Mediterranean flank. And when this fruit was at length ripened by the genius of the father and the industry of the son, they were dismissed and charged with faithless service.

What the Emperor wanted at that time we learn, not only from private letters, but from his Waterloo speech on May 21, 1890 (which Moltke would have kept unpublished); we learn it from all that happened between the visit to Spala and the conclusion of the Zanzibar treaty; we learn it from the statement in Bismarck's farewell speech, that he was unable to do what the Emperor wished in the domain of international politics. "I would," he said, "have unsettled all that the German Empire has gained by our foreign policy during many decades, in unfavourable circumstances, as regards our relations with Russia." The effect of it would be to make Russia distrust us and seek new friends. Franco-Russian Alliance (Caprivi shouts). Understanding with Italy (Rudini) and Austria-Hungary (Goluchowski). France is at last again free to enter into alliance; with the help of Moscow it entices Italy out of the Triple Alliance (Bülow laughs: *Extratour!*); is angry, as a Mohammedan Power, and revives warmly its ancient love of Britain (Bülow shouts). Italy plumes itself in the group of Western Powers, and month by month approaches Austria-Hungary (Tschirschky shouts). And England reflects on the Jameson telegram, the rivalry in the world's markets, and the Bagdad railway. Then, after sad disillusions, they seek to return to the

understanding between the three Empires, which Bismarck, *per varios casus, per tot discrimina rerum*, had already secured.

On the first day of his Chancellorship, Caprivi called for the draft of the secret treaty, which the Russians were prepared to sign, took it to the palace, and returned with the verdict: It is rejected. Schuvalov called him *un trop honnête homme*; in plain German he could not be characterised so politely. He had never said a word about the treaty to Bismarck, who had genially invited him to his family table and said that he was prepared for any political eventuality; he spoke only to subordinates, who are not very ready to give unwelcome answers to a new master. Perhaps the author would have been the best to explain the meaning of his work. Hugo Grotius reads somewhat differently than school-boys. Possibly the man of experience, who had not lost all intelligence when he lost his office, would have offered to allay any possible resentment on the part of Austria; possibly offered to go to Vienna (the treaty was worth more trouble than that in his eyes), or write to Francis Joseph. Did the Emperor do that? On April 3, 1890, the Express-adjutant Count Wedel (now governor in Reichsland) brought the Emperor from Austria an unusually long manuscript letter, written by Francis Joseph; this, it was said in Friedrichsruh, gave the reasons which "necessitated the retirement of Bismarck." Did it give them correctly?

In June 1892 the prince went to Vienna for Herbert's wedding. He had requested Francis

Joseph to receive him, and an audience was willingly granted, with the favour of going in his overcoat. He wanted to speak of the "double assurance," and to destroy the story of the faithless Chancellor. But Caprivi's Uriah-letter had preceded him. It is true that Kalnoky came to him, and the court at first showed little desire to "espouse the grievances of others," but he could not overcome the repeated "urgent representations" from the capital of a friendly and allied Power. The wedding-guest is approached and asked to withdraw his request for an audience, and he had to depart without seeing the Emperor, with whom he had been in official communication nearly forty years before, as envoy of Frederick William IV. When Chlodwig comes to Vienna a few days afterwards, he has the pleasure of learning that the higher nobility has held aloof from Herbert's wedding. And from the mouth of the aged Emperor he hears this comment on Bismarck : "It is sad that such a man could sink so low."

The treaty which Caprivi found so complicated was really simple enough. It said plainly to the Russians : We shall have to help the Austrians if you attack them, but not if they attack you, and for that we expect you to be neutral in case we are attacked by France. It might say to the Austrians : You have known for a long time that we are not willing to sacrifice German blood for your ambitions in the Balkans ; attack the Russians, therefore, if you are strong enough single-handed, or if you expect help from any other quarter ; if they attack you we shall be on the spot ; for you also the *casus fœderis*

is only set up if we are attacked, not if we attack ; our accounts agree therefore. Both treaties were intended and calculated to protect each of the three Empires from the nearest, and therefore most dangerous coalition : Russia from the German-Austrian, Austria from the Russo-German, Germany from the Russo-Austrian and (especially) the Franco-Russian. And the author of these assurances might, in view of his experience and his knowledge of monarchs and statesman, say to himself : Russia will not attack Austria, nor Austria Russia ; our fears are phantoms, and the contingencies which seem worst for us exist only on paper (as has happened) ; and therefore we secure a notable profit with very little outlay.

Many a nation would have raised an altar or a throne to the man who devised this and allayed the distrust of Alexander. In Germany he was dismissed and reviled. Why ? Because some one whispered in the ears of the German Emperor : " The real aim of this treaty is to secure power for life to the Chancellor, even in opposition to your exalted will. For no one but he can work with this awkward tool ; he alone can, with that inalienable confidence of which he boasts so much, play the last card at St. Petersburg or Vienna, as need may be. If he is troublesome to you, or too old, you may, in virtue of your royal prerogative, dismiss him, but he will then find some means to betray the secret of the treaty and, between the anger of Austria and the blame of Russia, we shall find ourselves in such a position that the nation will unanimously and

irresistibly call upon him to save us. That is his clever plan. Wilt thou help him to realise it, or wilt thou be Emperor, King, and Master ? ” Backstairs gossip ? No ; that was really said to the German Emperor. It was really believed by William, the grandson of William. In 1890 he thought that such conduct was possible to the man whom, in 1888, he had been ready to follow as standard-bearer. To that pitch they had brought him. Not a single man stood up and said : “ Consider the life of this man and the work he has done for thy house.” Not a single one. Chlodwig, who had three times—the last time being December 15, 1889—written at Bismarck’s dictation : “ If the frame of the Austrian monarchy is imperilled, we are bound to take action,” now wears his smart frock-coat, closes his lips, and industriously notes : “ He wanted to abandon Austria.” The aged General Pope alone gave vent to his fine soldierly feeling and exclaimed : “ The people who are about Your Majesty are sheer traitors.”

William wanted to fortify the frontier against Russia, warn Austria, and get out of the visit which, against the Chancellor’s wish, he on October 13, 1889, had promised to pay the Tsar. Why ? Because some old and one-sided consular reports stated what was in harmony with his mood (and what Waldersee’s ambition heard with pleasure). The protest against this proposal was Bismarck’s last act as Chancellor. “ I would in this way have unsettled all that the German Empire has gained in unfavourable circumstances by our foreign policy during

several decades, in the opinion of Your Majesty's two predecessors, as regards our relations to Russia." Alexander has not made war either on Austria or Germany. William did not withdraw from the visit to Spala. Did he warn Austria? Possibly he did, in the letter which Count Wedel brought to the capital. In Vienna, however, it was known that no warlike action was then contemplated in the Balkans, and there was no anxiety; not even when it was learned (as it soon was) what William had said at the palace to the generals in command about the Chancellor's faithlessness. That the international policy of Germany found a new pivot in that fateful month of March, we still see; and in our icy solitude we have reason to reflect on the saying of Bismarck (in the chapter on Russian policy): "What I fear is that on the road we have adopted our future is sacrificed to certain small and transitory gains in the present. Earlier rulers looked rather to the competency than the submissiveness of their advisers; if obedience is the only criterion, a strain is laid on the gifts of the monarch which even Frederick the Great would not be able to meet, although our policy in peace and war was less difficult in his time than it is to-day." If all whom it concerned had in 1898 paid due attention to these words, we should not to-day stand where we do; extreme Conservatives would not need to utter warnings about "excursions into the field of absolutism." Yet the story was then still accepted that the relations of the third Emperor and the first Chancellor had, after a brief unsettlement, become very cordial, and Bismarck

had given his dying blessing to William's work. Had they not visited each other? Had he not warmed the warrior's body with a grey cloak, a cuirass, and a sabre, heaped all sorts of honours on the old man's head, and angrily blamed the Reichstag for refusing to congratulate him on his eightieth birthday? Only poisoners of the wells—"professional haters"—could deny that a noble peace and most tender feeling had now been established.

Bismarck had retired from office like a well-bred man. He had invited to his table, as a young colleague, the successor who had, under higher orders, been so hastily put in his place. This man was, as a rule, a silent guest, but he said to Frau Johanna: "My feeling is like that of a child who is thrust into a dark room with his eyes bandaged." (Count Brandenburg, the adjutant of Frederick William IV, said, in November 1848, to the young man from Schönhausen: "I approach the matter like a child going into the dark. I am unfamiliar with questions of statesmanship and cannot do more than contribute my brains to the business. I need an elephant-driver, a man I can trust to tell me what to do." Everything in life repeats itself.) On March 24 the cuirassier sat alone at breakfast with the infantryman. Caprivi said: "If the Emperor sent me with an army-corps to a place where we were threatened with destruction, I would at first remonstrate, and then, if he repeated the order, obey in silence without asking the issue. That is what I am doing in this position." Very honourable—but dangerous.

Before he went away the prince entered the general's study. "Has your Excellency anything further to tell me, or ask me?" "I have nothing to tell your Excellency, and nothing to ask your Excellency." On March 29 he was off to Sachsenwald. In April, Bucher says that von Holstein and Rudolf Lindau have broken with the prince, and learns from Busch that Paul Kayser, a favourite of Bismarck, has anonymously published an unfriendly article on the Chancellor's return. Herbert gives a farewell dinner to the officials of the Foreign Office; four of them, who "owe everything to my father," decline. The prince hears that Caprivi has not renewed the secret treaty with Russia, and in the first speech of the Prussian Premier finds the sentence: "I regard it as an especially beneficent dispensation of Providence that the person of our exalted young monarch is fitted to fill the gap and stand before the breach." He was obedient. That was the intention, then. The editor of the *Hamburger Nachrichten* is, however, directed to treat Herr von Caprivi, whom the Prince greatly esteemed on account of his personal qualities, with consideration. (At the very time when Frederick of Baden said that Bismarck had furious and infamous articles written at Hamburg, and the Emperor spoke of them to Chlodwig "very angrily.") Four weeks afterwards the circular note against Bismarck is sent over the country. We learn from a letter of Bucher that Counts Lehndorff and Stirum, and Herren Krupp, von Kardorff, and Stumm, who still dare to visit Friedrichsruh, have "incurred the imperial

disfavour." On the day of Hochkirch and Jena the bitter Lothar writes : " I will also mention a decent man, Count Arco, our Washington Ambassador, who has been here for some days. *Rara avis.*" In the same letter he gives a warning against the Black Cabinet. (At the time all the letters written in the Sachsenwald house were brought in a basket to Bergedorf and then put in the post-box : this was for security.) Münster and Hatzfeldt send straight to Berlin every impetuous word that Herbert has spoken at London, and Rudolin " tells a number of unpleasant traits of the old prince." The Emperor, who in March found his Chancellor too Russophile, talks after Christmas of the blunder that Bismarck committed when " he made war on Russian finances." He is, however, confident : " The opposition of the *Hamburger Nachrichten* will last another year or two, and then cease." Soon afterwards : " I am urged from many quarters to be reconciled with Bismarck. I am quite ready, but it is not my place to take the first step. The Russians need a loan of six hundred million roubles, which they cannot get. I am not now on good terms with the Emperor Alexander. He has passed through here without visiting me, and I send him only ceremonious letters." In June 1892 Chlodwig, of the golden temper, says that the Alsatians fear that Bismarck is returning. The Emperor laughs : " They may be at their ease. He is not returning." After the prince's journey to Vienna, he says : " If people think that I will control Bismarck, perhaps send him to Spandau, they are wrong ; I have no idea of making a martyr of

him and seeing people make pilgrimages to him." (Had he, then, committed some punishable crime? Was there a court in Germany that would have condemned him? Was it only the favour of the Emperor that saved him from indictment?) In November: "Compare what Bismarck does with what poor Arnim is suffering for!" (Arnim had first been condemned to nine months in prison, and then five years in a house of correction.) Bismarck and Waldersee do not care what happens to the Empire; the one aim of their common hatred is to displace Caprivi. Chlodwig thinks that the reconciliation which he fears, and of which there is continual talk at the Court, is impossible; he notes that in his diary.

In August 1893, Bismarck was ill at Kissingen. The Emperor spoke of this illness to Hohenlohe on September 14, but also of "Bismarck's hostile conduct hitherto." Uncle Chlodwig hereupon observes triumphantly: "Of personal feeling I saw no trace." William went to Hungary, and from Güns sent a telegram in which he expressed very cordially his gratification at the prince's recovery, and offered him a castle in southern or central Germany for his convalescence. Bismarck respectfully thanked him, but said that his physician wished him to remain in familiar surroundings until he was quite recovered. The *Vossische Zeitung* said: "If Prince Bismarck were now to continue the struggle he has maintained against Count Caprivi, the Government, and the policy of the new régime, the telegram from Güns will put him in the wrong." The *Zukunft* said:

“ If Prince Bismarck departed a hair’s-breadth from his previous political attitude because he has been distinguished by the Emperor’s favour, he would justify the suspicion that it was not large and serious considerations, but small personal grievances, which could be quickly removed by a show of favour, that drove him into opposition.”

Naturally, everything remained as it was. But after the Decoration Festival in January 1894, Chlodwig is able to note : “ The event of the day, which was discussed at night at Holstein’s with Pourtalès and Marschall, was the appearance of Herbert. I saw him in the chapel where he seemed to be quite at his ease. In the Casino the Emperor was charged with having sent word that he wished to see Herbert and then snubbing him. The truth is that Eulenberg, through Kanitz and Blumenthal, had Herbert brought in the neighbourhood of the Emperor. It was hoped that there would be some approach and Caprivi’s position would be weakened. The whole thing miscarried.” What design the Court Marshal had in his inner mind I do not know, but it is true that Herbert believed the Emperor wanted to see him at the Decoration Festival. He would not have appreciated a conversation. A few yards from where he was standing, William, who had been speaking to the delegate Alexander Meyer, turned round and went back. (People at Court said that he muttered : “ I would rather deal directly with the old man ! ” and that the same hour he wrote the letter which Adjutant Count Kuno Moltke then took to Sachsenwald.)

Any one who would have a true idea of Chlodwig, the reliable historian and true friend, must listen to his groans at this. On January 22 : " The Emperor visited Marschall to-day and joked about Herbert. He has, nevertheless, at the same time sent an adjutant with wine to Friedrichsruh and expressed his pleasure at the prince's recovery. Bismarck sent a graceful reply, saying that after his birthday he would come in person to thank the Emperor." It would be hard to give a more audacious misrepresentation of a thing that happened under the eyes of all. The Emperor, who had worn the Prussian uniform for twenty-five years, had sent a pressing and amiable invitation to General Prince Bismarck to attend this military festival ; twice in the course of two days. The prince, who had no desire to mitigate the pleasure of His Majesty, begged to be allowed to send his congratulations and thanks the day before the festival. But Chlodwig speaks boldly of an approach on the part of Bismarck. " My friends at the Foreign Office are a little disturbed at the fear that Bismarck may persuade the Emperor to choose another Chancellor, and Holstein wanted me to persuade the Emperor not to yield if he received Bismarck." Assuredly Herr von Holstein was not so imprudent, even in a moment of fright. " At all events we must be careful. If a Bismarckian régime set in, I should certainly not remain long at Strasburg, but would have to give way to a friend of Bismarck." That is the first and last thought of the unselfish patriot. *Inde illæ iræ.* Concern and anger wring from him the confession : I cannot call

myself a friend of Bismarck : " The Conservatives and opponents of Caprivi now triumph. Yet I still believe that things will not turn out as bad as they look. At all events, it is good that I am here now." Very good. Three days afterwards : " The situation is not without risks. Caprivi acknowledges that he was not informed of the Emperor's intention. He bears it with resignation. In such circumstances I would not be Chancellor. [Wait a little !] It is good, however, that he is so resigned, and we retain him if Bismarck does not find the means, at this visit, to lower him in the Emperor's opinion." (The noble prince clearly thinks that every dignitary must equal himself in tact and decency, otherwise he could not attribute such low trickery to the Emperor's guest.) " God grant that Caprivi survive the storm." From the Russian Embassy he watches Bismarck go to the palace. " No signs of great enthusiasm." Indeed ? Not, perhaps, behind Schuvalov's double windows. Although it was only possible to see a white glove, a yellow stripe, and the sparkle of a steel helmet in the gala-carriage, between the hedges of troopers, a kind of intoxication seized upon the crowd. I was present and I have never seen greater enthusiasm. " It is certain that this reconciliation has earned the Emperor a good deal of popularity throughout Germany." Yet the good uncle thinks it is dangerous and ominous ; because he could think of nothing but Strasburg and Werki, Werki and Strasburg, until a later period.

(Nine months afterwards the good man became

Chancellor of the Empire. Not a word of regret that Caprivi did not survive the storm. Polite letter to Bismarck, whom he needed in his strong and unsatisfied craving for prestige; sudden desire "to convince myself by a personal visit that your Excellency and the princess are well." In January the visit is paid. At parting his host wishes him "Courage," and the mannikin does not see the point. In his deceit he makes an after-dinner speech: "The greatest of those heroes is as much beneath us as one of the oaks of the Sachsenwald. Unswerving fidelity and honour to the man who has given his life . . ." Who is this? Yet Bismarck, who had suffered so much, was too noble to distrust this dithyramb. He thanked him for his "kindly and noble utterance"; thanked the man who had written in his diary that the Chancellor grudged him "the recognition of the world and the Emperor" and had tried to destroy his position as governor, because "the Bismarck family was jealous that I had received this hereditary position while Bismarck had not been made the hereditary Duke of Lauenburg." It is true that Bismarck endeavoured to displace him from his position, but Maxime Ducamp says that the governorship is hereditary. "That gives me food for reflection. Bismarck has thrown a cudgel at my feet." (He takes all he can get.)

The day after Bismarck's visit the Emperor says to Chlodwig: "Now they may build triumphal arches to him at Vienna and Munich; I am a good length in front of him. If the Press grumbles now,

it puts itself and Bismarck in the wrong." A week afterwards the *Zukunft* said: "With far greater ease, candour, and emphasis may Bismarck now speak, if it again seems to him necessary to warn us against wrong and dangerous ways; even the short-sighted must now admit that a man who has reached satisfaction in every personal respect is endeavouring to give the advantage of his experience and insight to the Empire and the Emperor." Again in the same month ("Otto der Zahme"): "A man who allows himself to be swayed in his political attitude by personal motives, by the favour or disfavour of the monarch, will have the support only of his paid servants; others will turn their backs in chilled astonishment on the great diplomatist, recognising that he is a small man. A man who can speak as Bismarck has spoken during the last two years must have a very pessimistic idea of our position, and would lower himself in the verdict of history if he allowed himself to be diverted from his path by external happenings." He did not do it; he remained the same "before and after the battle." And the Emperor? The last word that Chlodwig hears him say about Bismarck is just as hard and violent as the angry words he spoke in March after the separation.

Bismarck never doubted that this would be the issue. He never thought seriously for a moment of "reconciliation." He must have suffered much and overcome much before he could speak as he spoke after the glorious summer of the Uriah-letter. The conquest was definitive, the wrench of his emotions

incurable. He was very unwilling to accept the invitation, yet did not hesitate a moment about accepting. "The bottle is open, I must drink," I heard him say to Herbert, who dreaded the journey; and he pointed with a pleasant laugh to the bottle of Steinberger. "If I withdraw again, as after the politeness at Güns, I am an old sinner, refusing to take the hand offered by my gracious master, and all that is official or hopes to be will hear it said: The Emperor wanted his advice and the vindictive old man would not come! Then my countrymen will think that I could have helped, and I shall be held responsible from that day. I am firmly convinced that my advice will not be asked, my opinion unsought, and not a word will be said about business. To convince others of that I must go. *Politesse n'est pas politique.*"

He looked like "some important prisoner of State" in the great ceremonial carriage with its escort. When he heard what the people hoped of the visit, he begged Count Hénckel in the palace "to pacify those folk outside." When he reached home, he said with a laugh that he had never told so many ballroom stories as in those hours at Berlin; not a single word had been said about politics, as he had hoped and expected. He knew why he had been troubled, and would never, like Caprivi, have pedantically complained to the Emperor that his private utterances often contradicted his "official pronouncements." Such things cannot always be avoided by the guardian of the State in days of storm. His wife gladly quoted from a friend's letter

a statement that "Ottochen" had passed once more in triumph through the Brandenburg Gate. Her husband, from whom death parted her soon afterwards, pined gently for two years. The statement that he ever looked forward with untroubled eye to the near future of the Empire, or ever praised the new régime except under pressure of politeness, is a piece of well-meant deception. He did not; he wished neither that people should caper round him as a national god while he lived, nor honour him in death. "Do not throw dust in people's eyes," was his constant warning. He said to every one who cared to listen to him that he was indeed more tranquil ("Age suits me better than any other of my enemies"), but not free from care. He secured the last rest for himself: a private burial, without pomp and incense. He died unreconciled.

His shade is to be reconciled: not by armour or golden sword, and assuredly not by any of the honouring titles of this world. When will the Bismarck drama become historical and take its place in the German mythos, to which the pain of fresh experience adds daily? When the error which turned it into a sad catastrophe is set right; when the maturing Emperor of the Germans banishes, as he once banished his most loyal servant, the illusion that he can rule alone. No monarch can now rule alone. He must, however brilliant be his endowment, think himself fortunate if he can, without shirking his duty, unburden himself of the responsibility for the colossal machine. Bismarck did not want to be a

minister under Frederick William IV. "I clearly saw the difficulty which any responsible minister of the monarch would have to overcome in view of his autocratic moods, and frequent changes of opinion, and in view of the irregularity of public affairs and the opportunity for political intriguers to use backstairs influence, as the followers of our princes have done until recent times under the ruling house—*pharmacopolæ, balatrones, et hoc genus omne*. The difficulty of being at once an obedient and a responsible minister was then greater than under William I." Shall we lie? Shall we idly deny that in the first decades of the rule of William II the difficulties were not less, and that the Empire will not prosper until they entirely disappear? To rule alone has been the ideal of many a young monarch; fortune has not granted that reward to any in our time. Wallenstein spoke mockingly of the bloody battles that had been fought for nothing "because the young general wanted a victory." How many has not our disillusioned gaze fallen upon! Are they less fateful because they were not on the red field of war? When the Friedländer assumed command, he laid down one condition: "That not a single man, not even the Emperor, shall be allowed to speak to my disadvantage with the army; if I have to answer for the issue with my honour and my head, I must be master." What the commander claims is due also to the statesman. Any man who assumes the leadership without such an assurance is, however smooth his tongue and superior his manners, a fool. Give us, Emperor, a man who will not bend his neck even

before thee and thy divine favour, and let him—a man—rule. Then the clouds will melt in the morning air. Then may the Empire, whose welfare thou must seek, count confidently on the grace of God. But it is already late, and Germany is impatient.

THE TSAR OF RUSSIA

(NICOLAI ALEXANDROVITSCH)

NICOLAI ALEXANDROVITSCH sits in a palace at St. Petersburg and recalls, with shattered nerves, the May-days of his life. When he was a boy and a youth each May-day revived his childish eagerness for his birthday-celebration. When he was twenty-two years old and heir to the throne, his father sent him into the wide world ; and on May 11, 1891, the Grand-Prince Nicholas was wounded on the head by a Japanese policeman at Otsu, near Kioto. Why ? He had injured no one, shown no vindictive nature. What was it that impelled the official, whose place it was to protect the foreign prince, to attempt his life ? Nicholas inquires ; and he learns that all Japan, noble or commoner, hates the Muscovites. Ever since they reached the coast from the Amur, and gave to the harbour which they had wrung from the weakness of the Manchurian dynasty the proud name of Vladivostock, the Mistress of the East ; ever since, in the spring of 1875, they compelled the Japanese to cede to them Sachalin, the ancient isle of the Aino ; ever since, about the same time, they began to cast covetous glances at Korea. Russia had, two centuries before, broken the bars behind which the eastern land of Nippon slept its dreamless sleep,

and had, against the Emperor's orders, forced the island-kingdom into commercial relations which swept the feudal State right into the whirlpool of capitalistic industry. Russia now designs an iron rail that shall convey its goods, its weapons, and its troops as far as the Japanese Sea. Russia's invasion of the East-Asiatic region had begun at Ussuri, thirty years before, under the lead of Nicolai Ignatiev; and Nicolai Alexandrovitsch was to inaugurate the Ussuri Railway with great pomp. Would it not be a patriotic thing to kill this prince, to deprive "the enemy in the north" of this heir to the throne? He escaped with a slight wound; three years afterwards he was Lord of All the Russias, and in 1896 went to Moscow to be crowned as Monomachos on the sacred mother-soil.

One more May-day: the last according to our reckoning. Crowds have come from all parts of the gigantic Empire to see the new Tsar, the young heir of the Khans and the Paleologi, who will wed his people on the morrow. A hundred thousand people lie under the open sky; they have hastened in their thick shoes of bark to behold the great symbol and take home with them, as a fetich, the consecrated coronation-cup. Song resounds over the Chodynka-field; booths, bands, and fair-amusements attract them, and that wild enthusiasm that is only witnessed in the sphere of the Islamic imagination blazes in their minds. At last the hour of the ceremony strikes. The impatient masses, after a sleepless night, full of enthusiasm and reeling

with vodka, burst the barriers and rush onward as if fever-driven, and, after a wild stampede, they stand still as if paralysed or restrained by horror. Three thousand men have been trodden under foot, crushed, stamped into bloody lumps of flesh steaming in the mud ; possibly four thousand—no one knows the exact number. No one knows the real cause of the catastrophe : not even the Tsar.

But on this May-morning the soft-hearted son of Ironhead realises the task appointed him. Officialdom is a rotten frame, incapable of independent action ; and there are a hundred million childlike men, vegetating, without inhibitory nerves. When he has dried the last tear, his dark mind seeks some remedy. The Russian people is poor and crude ; one could at least mitigate its suffering by taking the heavy harness from its neck. The millions who are sacrificed to the military service might manure the ground, and then the moujik would not bring fresh grossness from his barracks to the black soil. The dream seems pretty ; and on a certain day in May the Peace Conference is opened at The Hague. It is opened in 1899, by a certain Muravieff, whose ancestor had in 1858 wrung the Amur-region from the Chinese Emperor. These were better times. No more war : no new weapons : the White Tsar desires peace. Is there fresh trouble in the East ? Be comforted ; the nod of the cross-crowned sceptre dissipates the black cloud. Nicholas, whose name means victory, is the strong city of peace. . . .

It is May once more. A war such as Russia

has never waged before, not since the earliest times, has already cost thousands of lives, destroyed incalculable value, and lessened, almost abolished, the fear of the Tsar's power in East and West. And the yellow men have advanced victoriously as far as the walls of Port Arthur.

Two May-days were not seen by Nicholas ; and the sight of these might disarm the superstition. When one reflects carefully on them, one sees the steely glitter of the chain of causation through the mists. The Strait of Chi-Li separates Port Arthur from the harbour of Chi-Fu. In the spring of 1893 it was the scene of the prelude to the historic drama which the East has exhibited to us. Russian war-ships had come thither from Nagasaki in the later days of April. There were battleships, light-armed cruisers, and gunboats ; more than England had in these waters at the time. In the roads of Chi-Fu they prepared for battle ; woodwork, carpets, furniture, curtains, and everything that would spread fire, were thrown overboard. Any one who watched the hurried preparations on deck would believe that, at least on the following day, there would be a fight to the death. Yet not a single shot was fired. Everything was quiet and orderly in the Beach Hotel. In the drawing-room Russian, British, and German admirals sat at a table with plenipotentiaries from China and Japan. The short war had ended three weeks before, revealing the helplessness of China and the wild vigour of youth of Japan. Russia, Germany, and France had joined to prevent the delivery to the Japanese of the spoils promised

them in the Treaty of Shimonoseki. If Japan rules on the Liao Peninsula, Peking is menaced, and the independence of Korea is a vain illusion. So say the representatives of the three Great Powers at Tokio ; and they demand that the Japanese shall withdraw from Liao-Tung, and, in particular, evacuate Port Arthur at once. The men of Nippon hesitate. The blood of their brothers has been shed on the Peninsula ; they have stormed Port Arthur ; are they to sacrifice the most precious fruit of victory ? But Russia is in earnest ; it looks longingly towards Korea, needs an ice-free harbour, and has the means of enforcing its will. Warships are more convincing than the speeches of diplomatists. On that account the powerful squadron has gathered in front of Chi-Fu, and, if it is necessary, the batteries will speak. Russian uniforms are everywhere, as if the Tsar already reigned on the Gulf of Chi-Li.

A decision was reached in the Beach Hotel on May 10, 1895. The Russians had marked on the map with a red pencil the region which Japan must give up. "So my master bids, and he has told me to punish any hesitation with my guns." This language of the chief of the Russian squadron makes the little Japanese jump from their seats. Was such an arbitrary proceeding possible ? Their narrow eyes look anxiously round the table. Is there not a single voice in favour of the just rights of the conqueror ? Not one. The British admiral shrugs his shoulders and smiles coldly ; the business does not interest him much ; for the moment

nothing can be done against Russia on land. The Muscovite knows it. He flings his sword on the map which covers the table and asks again : " Yes or No ? " The yellow men glance quickly at each other. Their country is not prepared for such an encounter ; they must give in. They will evacuate Port Arthur, as soon as China pays the thirty million *taels* which are due. But Russia is in a hurry. In the same month of May, Herr Rothstein, the director of the St. Petersburg International Bank, goes to Paris and, in Witte's name, negotiates a loan which secures for the Chinese four hundred million francs under Russian guarantees. As the Tsar's Empire, which was always wanting money, would not beg a hundred millions for another without some ulterior purpose, the whole white and yellow world knew from that date that Russia was about to rob the poor Son of Heaven of some part—and no small part—of his territory. And the Japanese knew from May 10, 1895, that Liao-Tung, and Port Arthur in particular, was the object of the Muscovite's ambition, and that they would never tie up this bargain with the tangled threads of national right. What kind of right the Russians looked to they had learned when the Russian admiral threw his sword on the table. He was a hot-headed, thorough-going man, who spoke with powder and shot. His name was Makarov. . . . He and his ship, the *Petro-pavlovsk*, were blown up by a Japanese mine ; almost on the same day, nine years after the conclusion of peace at Shimonoseki, as that on which Makarov had swindled young Nippon out of the

profit. The humiliation at Chi-Fu is avenged. Russia's fleet is reduced to impotence for a time, and Russia's army beaten on the Yalu and at Kin-Chu. And the little yellow men menace Port Arthur with their terrible weapons.

The drowsy Son of Heaven rules there no longer ; it is not against men of their own colour, as in the former war at Liao-Tung, that the Japanese have now to direct their guns. The three Great Powers which had so unselfishly protected China in the spring of 1895 saw presently that in this perverse world of ours unselfishness is not much better than foolishness. They wanted their reward. In April 1896, Lobanov and Li-Hung-Chang sign a treaty at St. Petersburg which delivers Port Arthur and the Bay of Kiao-Chao to the Russians as a naval station. The Russo-Chinese Bank is founded. Russia may run its railway through Manchuria, and keep guard there with the troops it imports. Two years after Shimonoseki the Russians are firmly established in the Peninsula which they forced Japan to surrender ; and the victory has not cost them a single grain of powder. A very neat success, calculated to teach Count Bülow that one can annex good territory " without drawing the sword." When he returned from Rome in 1897 he seemed to have learned the lesson. Two German missionaries had been murdered in Shantung. Kiao-Chao was blockaded by our navy, and the whole region was afterwards incorporated in the German Empire : the very region which Li had promised the Russians two years before. It was not only on the Neva

that people were disturbed. Is Germany trying to become the chief Power in the Yellow Sea ? Is it trying to secure the East-Asiatic trade for itself ? Nine days after the conclusion of the Kiao-Chao Treaty Russia secured the lease of Port Arthur and Talienwan, and new railway privileges which gave it two important termini on the coast for its railroad. All restraint was now thrown aside. England took Wei-Hai-Wei ; France the Bay of Kwang-Chu. Japan got nothing ; and the nation of the Rising Sun angrily beheld the end of the great action which began in Tokio and Chi-Fu under the pretence that it was necessary to save the Chinese Empire from dismemberment. Now each of its unselfish protectors had his rich fragment.

The Japanese had long since lost Sachalin, and now they lost the hope of South-Eastern Manchuria. Was the Tsar going to rob them of Korea also ? In order to deliver the island from Russo-Chinese tutorship they had made war in 1894, and compelled the Emperor of China to abandon his rights. Korea was independent ; but it was secretly governed by the Japanese. Not secretly enough, however ; in the pride of victory the Japanese had lost their discretion. They murdered the obstinate Empress, and treated the terrified Emperor as a prisoner of State. The Russian agents took astute advantage of these blunders. One day Europe heard that the Emperor of Korea had escaped from his Japanese jailors and taken refuge with the Russian Envoy at Seoul. Again it is a May-day, the fourteenth, in the year 1896. Russia and Japan conclude a

treaty (afterwards signed by Lobanov and Yamagata), which solemnly announces the independence of Korea, limits their claims to public works, and binds the contracting parties not in future to raise the number of their troops on the island above a thousand men. Such treaties were for Russia the *societas leonina* of Cassius Longinus: all the profit to the noble Muscovite, a stamped bit of paper for the other party. The pretensions of the Russian envoys to Korea would have earlier led to an open conflict if their zeal had not been cooled by the Manchurian Treaty. Those who have Port Arthur may abandon Korea; so they thought at that time, and they had therefore left the island to the Japanese. They are not seriously to be feared. They will have to obey any order of the Slav giant. They had been spoken of a few weeks before in Russia as monkeys; the name was taken from the narrow-nosed monkeys of Eastern Asia, which look as if they had been arrested in development between the stage of the common monkey and the baboon. The superior people of Russia need not concern themselves about Korea.

The Boxer War tore the bandages from the eyes of all who were not blind, and new tendencies showed themselves about the same time in St. Petersburg, Moscow, and Vladivostock. Manufacturers, merchants, and speculators had earned enormous sums in Manchuria, on the railway and the forts of the magically born city of Dalny. This source gradually dried up, and the business men and swindlers looked about for a new way of making

money. If only one could carry the railway on to the harbour of Fusan—right through Korea ! The island was believed to contain ore, coal and copper in abundance ; many said that it had silver and gold in its bosom. That would be something to capture. Why not ? Yes, said the Russians at Liao-Tung, why not ? Properly speaking, Korea belongs to Manchuria ; we ought to have taken it long ago. Port Arthur is not enough. Who can compel us to remain on the right bank of the Yalu ? It was, as we have so often seen in colonial history, a mixture of cupidity and national pride. Korea again became the objective of Russian expansion.

Now follows stroke upon stroke. Admiral Alexiev is appointed Governor, in the name of the Emperor, in the Amur region, and his first word as dictator is : “ We remain here until we have what we want.” The Yalu Society suddenly springs into being under the lead of Herr Gunsburg, on the pretext of a concession, not used for a year, of the right to take timber from the woods of Korea, and it summons Cossacks into the country to protect its workers. Is the old game beginning again ? The Japanese cannot be restrained any longer. They are conscious of their strength, and remember all that they have done and endured since the shameful proceedings at Chi-Fu. The cost of living has increased five-fold at Tokio in two years under the burden of the new taxes ; and no one grumbles. Money was needed. The organisation of the land-army had to be improved, and a fleet must be built according to a carefully framed plan : a fleet that

should give the Japanese the command of the sea in their own region. The alliance with England protects them from the interference of a third Power. This time the northern foe shall not bully us. He is established in Manchuria, but that is China's business. However, he wants Korea also, and merely puts us off with excuses until he has conveyed an army. We cannot, and must not, wait. Revenge for that day in the Beach Hotel! It is *our* red pencil now that outlines the forbidden territory; it is *we* who fling the sword on the table. The Government hesitates, it is true, but they are carried away by the passion of the nation; and before the Most High ventures to wish it, the guns speak in the name of the Mikado.

Nicolai Alexandrovitch did not want war: not at the cost of his great repute in arms. As late as January 14, 1904, he said to the assembled Diplomatic Corps that he was firmly determined to maintain peace on the Yellow Sea; and he was quite sincere. He had felt in his own body at Otsu the hatred of the despised monkeys for Russia; and he had learned to know his own childlike people in the field of Chodynka, on the first occasion when he wore the crown. Yet he blindly allowed those about him to go on. Tens of thousands bled for this one blindness. For he is lord of life and death, Pope of the Greek Church, chosen by the grace of God to be the supreme shepherd: so the consecrated Popes say.

Viatcheslav Constantinovitch Plehve, the one minister to whom the anointed listened, was killed in the middle of that summer by a bomb. He had

dreaded that end, and, in order to escape it, had not shrunk from ridicule. The carriage in which he drove was armour-plated and surrounded by a troop of protectors—bicyclists, mounted men, often a motor-car—a living hedge before and behind, to right and to left. Between revolvers and sabres, hidden from gaze, this high-born gentleman, with the prematurely weathered façade of a giant and a viper's eye in the head of a fine jaguar, shrank behind the small windows of his rolling fortress. Thus did His Excellency show himself to, and hide himself from, his orthodox fellows. He was ridiculed in the government offices, and was mockingly asked, when no one stood by to hear, whether he, playing the part of a tyrant, was not ashamed to show his nervousness in broad daylight on the streets. No : he was not ashamed. Like Philip VI, the crowned ninny who was so badly beaten at Crecy, this would-be hero regarded himself as the man chosen by Providence to save his country ; the armour-plating protected the fortune of Russia. Everybody should see that in the whole Empire there was not another man so threatened and so feared as Viatcheslav Constantinovitsch Plehve. Why ? Because no other man serves the Autocrat so faithfully. That would move the Emperor. It did move him ; Nicholas's nervous feelings were touched by the sight of such devotion. The whole structure was really useless. The man who is prepared to sacrifice his life can tear his victim out of the thickest bodyguard and take him with him down the dark way. It had been proved a hundred

times that neither uniformed nor secret police could protect a man threatened by fanatics : a thousand times, indeed, ever since Harmodios and Aristogeiton struck Peisistratos. But was Plehve the man to take a lesson from history ? He had laughed at the schoolmaster.

A hundred years before there had been an Imperial historian in Russia named Karamsin, who gave the Bible to the growing Panslav communities. This Orenburg Asiatic, angered by Speranskij's playing with the fashion, wrote that there was no question of a constitution or of the slightest restriction of the autocracy, and warned people not artificially to awaken in an illiterate people desires that might, if left to themselves, still slumber for centuries ; he could see no hope except in a speedy return to national tradition. If Plehve had had even a spark of that feeling we could respect him. In the necrologies he is another Karamsin ; he reminds one almost of the gifted Ascanian who is so much at home in the climate of Russian Islam. In point of fact he was something quite different. He had nothing of the temperament, the passionate conviction, of Katkov, or the great intelligence of Pobiedonostzev, who would absorb all available knowledge in order to decry it as futile and a scandal to the orthodox. Plehve never looked to anything but himself and his career. Never once, even in a dream, did the idea occur to him of the only serious revolution that seems to be possible in Russia : the rise of the Slav peasantry, of the stupid masses, against the thin forehead of the intellectuals with their Western

tendencies. That would not have suited him. He out-tyranted the tyrant, ran feverishly from point to point, molested and stirred up Finns, Poles, Armenians, and Jews, deprived professors and students, peasants and artisans, of their slender right to live, and would not suffer a word of censure to appear in the Press.

Yet he wished to be liked ; he loved to read praise of himself and shrank from the curse of unpopularity. He posed as something of a philosopher, an Hegelian of the old State-school, and could always find an hour to spare if there was a hope of inducing some journalist, possibly one from Paris or London, to write a panegyric of himself. He was not a reactionary, but was ambitious. What he really believed no one knew ; it was hardly known whence he came. Was he a Pole or a German, a Catholic, Calvinist, or Orthodox ? Certainly he was not a pure Russian, and had not imbibed the traditions of a decent nursery. All the more need for him to beat his patriotic breast, if he was to get on, and to praise the blessing of a venerable tradition. It would have suited him better to play the part of a Liberal, but as an iron fist was wanted at the time, the Pole had to adapt himself to the hour, to play the rigid Conservative, and to daub his giant-façade thick with iron paint.

His business had inured him to obedience and hardness. He was a State-attorney, and had to investigate ordinary crimes and Nihilist conspiracies and scuffle with astute lawyers for the poor sinners ; and he did his work so well that he soon stood out

above the herd of officials. He had the nose of a bloodhound and the cunning tongue of Reineke imploring justice before Nobel's throne. His forensic ability and eloquence were gifts that could not long go without reward. Loris Melikov (the Liberal was not strong in knowledge of men) appointed him departmental head in the Ministry of the Interior. Now he had to be careful, to keep his foot on the first rung of the ladder at any cost, and climb higher without exciting the jealousy of malicious neighbours. He succeeded. He gave no offence, was never troublesome, and worked with the same zeal under three Emperors and three totally different systems of Government. He followed suspects into the darkest corners. No scruple or dislike of fraud hampered his robust conscience. It was hard, but necessary, for him to blacken his foster-father, to watch the correspondence of Loris Melikov, when that feeble reformer fell into disgrace. He became Privy Councillor, Secretary of State for Finland, and, when Sipjagin was murdered, Minister of the Interior. The old Adam still lived under the new coat, however. The State official who detects criminals everywhere can easily manufacture any desired proofs of guilt, and is so hardened that he does not move an eyelash if he has to send six men to the gallows between breakfast and lunch. . . . The able General Fadejev used to say that there was no such thing as an entirely stupid man; every man had his use. Plehve was an industrious, prompt, and good-looking official, an ideal beadle. But, as Schiller says, a vicegerent of Heaven may, like

Heaven itself, sometimes misunderstand his people, and make a bad minister of a good hangman.

Plehve was a very bad minister ; among people of high rank he was a fool, and was almost more despised than hated by cultivated men in the Tsar's dominions. Still he gave the clique no cause to regret his promotion to high office. In the spring of 1902 Nicholas seemed to be disposed to retire quietly before the menace of the Japanese monkeys. No wonder ; Sergej Julievitsch Witte still controls the mind of the modest ruler and prevents foolish adventures. That must not last. The camarilla, including a few Grand Dukes, Alexiev, Bezobrazov, and others *ejusdem farinae*, has first to separate the monarch from the Minister who has controlled international policy since the death of Lobanov. The old game, which has so often been fateful for kings, was begun again. An Emperor, it is suggested to the throne, should never bow to the will of a mortal. A monarch by the grace of God sees farther than other men. After a time it works. The good-natured, retiring Tsar, who wishes to do the best he can for his people, falls into the illusion which Bismarck has humorously characterised ; many monarchs seriously imagine that they have a special Privy-Councillor-relation to the Almighty. It was now time for bolder measures against the minister. This M. Witte acts as if he were trustee of Alexander III. He has, moreover, no sense of Russia's historical mission, and dares to say that even we are subject to the law of evolution and must follow the path of European civilisation : we

who are made of a totally different stuff than those dirty ruffians of the West. What monstrosities has he perpetrated, then ? Founded schools. The great Empress once said, very truly : " Once our peasants begin to learn anything they will soon dislodge me from my throne." What more ? Brought unsound industries into the country and made the proletariat restless. The man is certainly not a reliable support of the sacred autocracy ; he is endeavouring to become all-powerful in the Empire and considers himself indispensable. This device never fails. No one must think himself indispensable in a monarchy. Nicholas loses the candour he had hitherto shown in his intercourse with his ablest minister, and assumes the false and unkingly pride of the weakling who feels that he is overshadowed by the deeds of others. He will show his independence, rule as Monomachos ; and still he finds himself restricted at every step. There is not a useful servant in the whole Council. The chief keeps them all under firm discipline. Then Plehve is summoned, and at last the son of Alexander the Quiet, Alexander the Strong-headed, has the man he wants.

Li-Hung-Chang had foreseen the danger of the Asiatic war. When he went to Russia for the Coronation he urgently advised the Minister of Finance only to carry the railway as far as Vladivostock and not to be drawn to the south ; otherwise there would be disastrous complications. China will give all possible assistance and, in order to save the Russians a deviation of four hundred miles, will allow them to build the Manchurian section

Nertshinsk-Tsitsikar-Vladivostock. But they must not go farther south. Witte had endorsed the warning and always recommended the evacuation of Manchuria. That had upset the calculations of the camarilla, which already dreamed of Korea and new profitable ventures. It was not easy to win the Tsar to their plans ; the blast of a trumpet would have terrified the neurasthenic dreamer. One must go to work more quietly. What Witte wants is not wrong, they say, but it cannot be done by the means he recommends. A financier like Witte knows nothing of tactics. If you do not impress the yellow men you are lost. If we yield a little to-day, they will ask three times as much to-morrow. No : bang the table, rattle your sword, and remind the monkeys that they have to deal with the Russian Empire, before which the earth trembles. Then they will give in ; they will be careful not to pick a quarrel with us ; they will only make a noise as long as we keep quiet. That is the mistake we have made hitherto ; we have been too modest. The White Tsar must always show that he sits on the throne of the judge of the world. So the tempting flute played, and Nicholas was captured. He wanted to maintain peace, thought that the Japanese would quietly submit to any amount of contempt and to the lessening of their territory, and forbade the due equipment of the forces. He was respectfully resisted in the Council of Ministers. Witte's first and last word was : " We must keep our promises." Plehve came into office as the confidential agent of the Court clique and openly supported the camarilla.

The wish of the Emperor was the supreme law to him; and the fool was often clever enough to inspire the wish of the Emperor. The Tsar was pleased. At last he had an assistant on whom he could rely in any circumstances; one who brought with him from the barristers' bench the gift of prompt reply; one who overrode everybody and who substituted bluntness for knowledge.

In Russia, where nothing can be published, everything is known. The words that passed between Witte and Plehve in the privacy of the Royal Council were soon repeated, and went from mouth to mouth. Witte said that the military occupation of Manchuria was aimless, and Port Arthur would be useless to Russia for an indefinite period. Plehve replied that when you put your foot on the first step of a stair you must go on, if you do not wish to seem afraid. Witte advised leaving the whole muddle of controversial questions in Eastern Asia to diplomatists, who would settle the most delicate points without any noise. Plehve replied: "Russia became what it is by using its bayonets, not its diplomatists." The Government attorney who had been thrust into politics, whose diplomacy consisted in the adroit use of phrases, and for whom Russian history was a sealed book, was bold enough to attack the Colbert of the Russian Empire at every possible opportunity. He was very proud of his achievement, talked of his oratorical triumph, and let himself be greeted by adventurers as the saviour of the country. Witte did what self-respect bade him do. He saw that Russia was about to engage

in the most stupid war it had ever waged, would not be responsible for it, and offered his resignation. Possibly he hoped that the Tsar would retain him, but he was graciously permitted to retire. The ablest and most successful financial Minister of the Romanovs departed. The war began, and found Russia as unprepared as its peace-loving Tsar could wish it.

When peace was concluded, the Tsar should have recalled Witte from his retirement. When he was advised to make him an active Minister once more, he said : " I will, if Russia wants it, take on this yoke again, however painful it is to me." He consoled himself, however, with the reflection that Russia did not want it. He hesitated long about choosing Witte as his representative at the Peace Conference. He had at that time the idea of breaking off the negotiations, denouncing Japan to the world for extraordinary arrogance, and seeking a remedy in a people's war of the Kutusov type. This idea was abandoned when it was found that they had to deal with reluctance on the part of the troops and to avoid drastic and comprehensive recruiting. If, however, they were to be serious about peace, the best man for Portsmouth was Witte. And Sergej Julievitsch has powerful friends at the Court. The Empress does not like him because he " upsets her husband so dreadfully nearly every Friday," but she has a high opinion of his ability and would like best to see him in the position of a British Premier, taking the burden from the shoulders of her " Nica " and leaving him free to live the com-



Photo

THE TSAR OF RUSSIA

Boissonnas & Eggler

fortable life of stout Uncle Edward. The Empress-Mother, who could not be induced to receive Mme. Witte at the Court, and even in her widowhood maintained the boycott, has a high appreciation of the man who was her husband's financial minister; her adored Sascha had discovered Witte and raised him to the highest place in the Empire. Possibly their united Majesties would not, even with the help of a Grand Duke, have succeeded in bringing Witte back into the foreground. Nica is opinionated, and, like all weaklings, always anxious to prove that he cannot be influenced and his strong will cannot be broken or even bent. But certain clever courtiers then came to him, and said: "Let Sergej Julievitsch go in peace across the sea, little father. In the first place, we shall be well rid of him here for a time; he will no longer whisper in the dark corners, hobnob with foreign journalists, and criticise our actions and omissions. He cannot be hailed as the Regent or Dictator, the Robespierre or Gambetta of to-morrow. In the second place, our affairs are in such a bad way that we have not much to hope for from Portsmouth. The man who brings home the treaty of peace is played out, and will be denounced and angrily belaboured by the miserable cackle that calls itself public opinion. Let him go, Batjuska, and give him all the powers he asks; the providential man who is now pressed on thee as thy best servant will return with a smaller nimbus and thou wilt have an opportunity of sending the much-praised man afterwards as a scapegoat into the wilderness."

That may have pleased the poor Tsar. Witte, however, was cleverer than his enemies ; too clever to fall into a trap. He knew what he was venturing ; that he was staking his life's work. He seemed, nevertheless, to go willingly ; he took with him trump-cards that no one else could take. He knows the needs of his country (which, as I have seen unmistakably in many a conversation with him, he loves with all the passionate ardour of a temperament that is rarely fully revealed), he has had personal intercourse with all the kings and princes of European finance and knows how to approach each of them, and he has an unswerving confidence, confirmed by fourteen years of experience, that Russia can get all the money it wants, and that all the bankers of the Continent will hasten to the man who will hold out to them the hope of a loan. It is even more important that all the East-Asiatics regard him as a clear-headed man, almost as of their own kindred. (And rightly : his genius is of a primitive Asiatic character. I do not believe that he is of German extraction, as is constantly asserted in the Press. He can hardly put together a sentence in German, and he has the genuine Moscow accent. His French is not remarkably good, yet certainly not worse than that of the Japanese.) The aged Li-Hung-Chang had an almost paternal affection for him, and the Japanese Count Matsukata called him his honoured friend. He had prestige, experience, and the difficult art of dealing with men. His opponents had always insinuated that his early education was defective ; that when he had jobbed

enough with Rothstein and other brokers, he would get Radical professors from St. Petersburg or Moscow to teach him the latest ideas, pose as a high modern social politician, and physic the sick body of the unhappy country according to the recipes of dogmatic Socialism and Marxism. They said that his only real strength was in dialectics ; that no one could beat him with the tongue . . . until Plehve came.

He could beat him. Must not Nicolai have been enchanted ? At last an assistant on whom he could rely in all circumstances and who was not afraid of Sergej Julievitsch ; at last a prospect of being delivered from the tyranny. Did this Witte already think that he was a Bismarck or anything more than a clerk in the Tsar's service ? Ridiculous. He was an insignificant director of the South-Western Railway who had become known by writing a book on the principles of railway tariff-policy, and whom Wyshnegradskij had, in order to get rid of an ambitious rival, promoted from being departmental head in the Treasury to the head of the Ministry of Commerce. Since the time when he came back to succeed Wyshnegradskij, he has certainly done much good work ; put the finances of the State in order, introduced the brandy-monopoly and a lower zone-tariff, nationalised railways, laid down the line through Siberia and Manchuria, created industry, regulated the hours of labour by law, improved the inspection of factories, and (because he needed for his reforms more money than the yearly increasing claims of the army left for him)

suggested to the Autocrat of all the Russias the graceful rôle of a saviour of the world. Suggested. . . . That is just it. It was whispered everywhere: "He has hypnotised the Emperor and can do what he likes with him." The Tsarina herself joked about this hypnotism and made a drawing of her husband sitting like a pretty doll on Witte's knees. In quiet corners courtiers showed each other an even worse caricature: Nica as a poodle, trying with its tail and paws to win the notice of the all-powerful Finance Minister. Intolerable. And Sergej Julievitsch became worse every year. His conceit recognised no limit even in the throne. The Fridays, on which he reported to the Emperor, were for Nicholas a burden which he dreaded for days in advance. The adjutants at the St. Petersburg Palace used to say: "When Sergej Julievitsch treads you can hear it all over the palace." Nicholas afterwards went to the family room, pale, tired to death, and quite upset. And was it all good for Russia that this overbearing upstart had done? Does not the revolutionary movement, which shakes the ground in the large towns, not come from the centres of an industry which is of no use to Russia? Was it wise to let Socialist principles be introduced into this young country? And is the advice to meet the Japanese as far as possible consistent with the dignity of the greatest military Power? Providence had sent Plehve. Already the August day is dawning which will see Nicolai Alexandrovitsch at the grave of his murdered

favourite. And Witte goes over the sea, to represent Russia.

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“We, Nicolai Alexandrovitsch, Emperor and Autocrat of All the Russias, Tsar of Moscow, Kiev, Vladimir, Novgorod, and Astrachan, of Poland, Siberia, and the Taurian Chersonese, Lord of Pskov, Grand Duke of Smolensk, Lithuania, Volynia, Podolia, and Finland, Prince of Esthland, Livonia, and Courland, have assembled here to-day, before the Ruric throne, the Grand Dukes, the Imperial Council, the Committee of Ministers, the Holy Synod, the General Governors and Governors of our provinces, the highest dignitaries of the Army and Navy, and the trusty members of the Zemstvos, in order to make known our will to this Russian gathering of orthodox Christians, so that they may go forth and spread the purport of our will as far as our national colours, white, blue, and red, float under the vault of heaven, as far as the cross of the apostle to the Scythians flutters in the breeze on our battle-flag. The purport of our will is to secure peace for the people, to spare our suffering Empire new victims, to bring back to the men of Russia once more the blessing of peaceful labour for their homes and the commonweal, such as they enjoyed in happier days under the protection of our ancestors. That can, and must, only happen in our Holy Rossija as long as we are free, not subject to external pressure, but choosing according to our independent will. That we may still do. The enemy, who bleeds from a thousand wounds inflicted by our sword,

loses the bloom of his youth, and sees the strength of his body decay, cannot think us powerless. We are immeasurably richer than he in men, in treasures of the soil, and in credit, and nothing in the world can prevent us from fighting on until he sinks under the burden of his armour. Nothing but our own will. A fresh army would hasten at our call to the Far East ; more gold would be offered to us, before we asked it, from all the treasuries on the earth ; and when the mantle of winter spreads once more over our northern rivers, squadrons which even hate must dread would bear the flag of Russia to the Yellow Sea. We have been struck, but we are not exhausted or conquered. God is still over us. He does not wish that the life of man, on whom he breathed, should be of less account than that of a dog, which no good man would put to death in an evil mood. But it would be the act of an evil disposition to wish now to bring the fruit to maturity at any cost, when the Empire of the Tsars will gather it more easily later, after patient waiting. Remembering the divine command to respect the image of the Creator even in the most insignificant man ; remembering also the days when the Russian people once summoned Rurik, Simeus, and Truvor, the three Varangians, to the broad, beautiful and rich land of the Slavs, in order to bring about order, when for the general good the Crown was offered to them, not wrested from an unwilling people, a thousand years ago, we have resolved to bring the great contest to a peaceful close, and have, as beseems a man and a ruler, openly expressed our

intention, without intermediary, directly to the Emperor of Japan. In the lofty sentiment of the Emperor Mutsuhito, clouded, but not darkened, by grief at the loss of two hundred thousand men, we found an ally of our wish. Already the main conditions of peace, which awakens the men of Russia from old and pleasant dreams and cuts them off from the Southern Ocean, are made known; and in a few days the brave army of the survivors may return from the theatre of war to their homes.

“Let there be no untruth between us and our people! This peace not only means a diminution of Russian power and a lowering of the prestige which the growing Empire of the East has won over the whole earth; it is such a humiliation as history has rarely seen since David slew Goliath and Dareios was defeated by a handful of Macedonians. The strong leaves the field to the weak, to one who has been long despised. Had it not been for this reluctance to smirch the Empire of our fathers with the legacy of disgrace, we would have sought peace under the last winter’s moon. It was in the dark days of affliction, when domestic trouble raised its hydra-head and brother had to take arms against his brother in our own land, that we came to a decision. That peace only is possible which leaves intact the honour of Russian arms. If the war has slain thousands of the innocent, the peace must punish the guilty. The son of Philip and Olympia could be content with a lifeless expiatory sacrifice; when he burned the city of the Persian kings, Persia’s crime seemed to him to be erased

from memory by the glowing waves of this ocean of fire. Heavier guilt demands a living victim. For the grandsons of Alexander Nevskij live in a different zone of the earth from that of the Macedonian pagan. Since the days when he rode Bucephalus victoriously over the Balkans there has come to us the gospel that the obedient man, who bows humbly to the Divine command, serves the Lord of the World better and more agreeably than one from whose burning altar the smoke of sacrifice rises early and late toward heaven. And since the first Christian Prince Alexander took the name of Nevskij from the victory he won over foreign invaders on the Neva, the inner ear of the Russian community has listened to the voice of Samuel, the word of the judge, on kings : ' The king shall take your sons and appoint them for himself, for his chariots and to be his horsemen ; and some shall run before his chariots. And he will appoint them captains over thousands, and captains over fifties ; and will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots. . . . And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your olive-yards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants. And he will take your men-servants, and your maid-servants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work.' This terrible picture of a king was shown in Holy Scripture to the nations, and revealed to Christendom, so that a man whom the grace of God has given so vast a power over others cannot hope

that the cloud of a fire could cover up the misuse of this power for all time.

“Who has sinned? We take the ensign of the Monomachos from our anointed head, divest ourselves freely of all tokens of earthly majesty, and speak as a Russian Christian to our orthodox brothers.

“I, Nicolai Alexandrovitsch, have sinned. You shall seek no other guilty one, my brothers. Not in this does my guilt consist that I have so long refused to share my inherited power. That would I do only if my comfort, and the comfort of those about me, were not of more consequence to me than the peace of the Empire; I will confidently take this resolution before the throne of the King of Heaven. There are too many races within our frontiers, and our history is yet too young, for us to think of governing ourselves amid a hostile world. The result would be dismemberment, catastrophe, powerlessness. So my people also feel. Russia wants a master. Those who assail the Autocracy are the deadly enemies of order, or confused fanatics; half-grown, conceited youths who imagine that they can learn from impious books how the world is to be bettered, or pleasure-seekers who have abandoned their native ways and have forgotten, in intercourse with foreign women, what their mother needs at home. If the hundred and forty millions of our kingdom were to speak, they would ask us to maintain the old foundations of the Empire; and their unanimous cry would drown the shrieks of the sectarians, as the war-song of Christian warriors

drowns the wail of an erring maiden. Not for this does my conscience trouble me, that I have not suffered the lordship to be wrested from the majority in spite of the will of the majority. Nor, again, because I was recently forced to suppress by violence a violent insurrection. Not to the enemies of Russian tradition alone can it be permitted by God to arm themselves with fire and sword, nor can the guardians of this tradition be commanded by Him to endure such assaults unarmed. These men have tried to paralyse the arm of Russia at a time of grave trial and danger ; they have sought to undermine the fastness of our power with scandal and bold deeds ; they allied themselves with the enemy and the foreigner ; and it was therefore our duty to meet their frenzy with all our forces. It was not for the protection of the Emperor that armed men shot their unarmed brothers in the capital. The Emperor was well guarded, his residence far and safe from hostile attack. The property of peaceful citizens, threatened with plunder, and the freedom of the workers, intimidated by drunken bands, had to be protected. On that account only did I, with heavy heart, give the order for bloody suppression. This blood will not be upon me in the hour of judgment. The sin I committed as guardian of our venerable tradition was the pardonable sin of well-meaning weakness. I aroused unrealisable hopes, hesitated too long before deciding, and many times, for the sake of peace, I suffered error to cloud the minds of men. A ruler whom his people respectfully

address as father must be constant in will ; and I was not constant. He should know whom to trust ; and I trusted one man one day, another the next, and then none. He must know the goal of the march and ever keep in mind the way he will lead those who blindly follow him ; and I never knew whither I was going. My fault it is that the illusion arose that the days of Autocracy were numbered. The confusion would not have become so great if at all times men had seen my will—the will of the Emperor, the head of the Church, the father of his people—to root out all doubt.

“ Yet I have a graver guilt to confess. I promised the people that I would maintain peace, and I dragged it into the bloodiest war yet described in the books of human history. Let us not ask to-day whether it might have been averted or postponed. The answer would but be the work of short-sighted mortal wisdom. Even the highest may err ; but if he be found still to err constantly, to be the plaything of evil councillors, and unable to see as far as the peasant, he must descend from his lofty seat. When the folly of youth impels one to seek the office of judge of the world and to spread over the land the glad gospel of peace on earth, he must be firmly resolved to avoid himself the slightest offence that may lead to struggle and war. And when one ventures to lead to struggle and war the troops which owe him obedience, he must see that they are properly equipped for their work ; he must not himself put obstacles in the way of equipment.

On him lies the responsibility. And if it bears him down, his sin is unpardonable.

“That is my guilt. I might have left to Japan the fruits of its victory over China, and I did not. I might have followed the advice of the wise yellow man who came to Russia to honour the festival of my coronation, and did not weary of warning us of the pitfall in south-eastern Asia ; and I closed my ear to his speech. For I thought myself the elect of Providence, who would at last realise the old Russian longing for a southern sea. Without bloodshed. Who would dare to measure his forces against ours, to take the field against our army, before which the earth trembles ? Assuredly not the little nation of yellow, narrow-nosed monkeys. It was very courageous and warlike, but more modest when there was serious question of opposing my will. I may be forgiven for not knowing my opponent, but not for miscalculating my own resources. Because I liked a quiet life in domestic comfort, I kept away from the Army, listened not to its words, asked not about its needs with careful inquiry, and glanced at it only casually, without any inclination to penetrate the framework of the organism. All autocrats whose memory is blessed by their peoples have lived with the Army ; I lived with my family, with priests and authors and buffoons. Why waste valuable time on an instrument that I should never need to use ? Peace should continue on the earth. I clung to this gospel ; for I loved the new saviour who had announced it, even more than him at whose cradle it was first promulgated. I only

smiled when I was told that Japan was quietly preparing for war, and when it was repeated and I was urged to hurry with the equipment of the troops and repair the gaps in our armour without delay. I am not going to war—that was always my reply. Equipment would be an incitement to war, or might be so interpreted by my opponent. Let there be no hurry in building battleships ; no conveyance of fresh troops to the East ; no new division for the protection of the Manchurian railway. We must avoid everything that can excite the distrust of the Japanese. So I spoke ; but was he not excited when I tore up with armed hand the Treaty of Shimonoseki ? When I took from him the spoils of victory ? When we settled in Port Arthur and stretched out our hands toward Korea, as we had once done toward the Aino-island Sachalin ? I acted like a boy who annoys a wild beast held by a chain until it breaks the chain and flings itself on the defenceless culprit ; like a robber who takes from a traveller one piece of clothing after another and does not notice that his victim has drawn a pistol, and then cries : ‘ This wretch falls upon me, a peaceful man, with powder and shot in the quiet night, without giving me any warning ! ’ My conduct was just as clever and honest.

“ I still smiled confidently when the enemy had already cocked his guns, and said to myself : ‘ All preparation for war is prevented, and so there will be peace. *Mea culpa.* ’ Seek not the guilt in the deeds or omissions of others. The fact that they had bad counsellors does not lessen the remorse

of kings. Who bade them lend ear to the evil adviser? Vanity, which prefers the evil, the cowardly, the pliant to the troublesome man whose feeling of duty impels him to warn and admonish. Kings, believe me, always have the counsellors they deserve. Have I ever suffered to remain near me one who contradicted me and did not daily flatter my designs? . . . The eye of Sergej Julievitch tells you and me the answer plainly enough: No.

“The time that had been lost through my fault, my resistance to all warnings, could not be regained. The ships were unprepared and without trained men. The Army was five thousand miles from the theatre of war. Arms, munitions, food—nothing was ready for such a struggle. And there was one single rail, threatened by the enemy and by marauders, to convey men and beasts, arms and provender, surgeons and nurses, to the point where they were needed. In the course of months the strategy and tactics might have been sketched, the country studied by our topographical corps, and the Chinese, Manchurians, and Tunguses won by money and promises; nothing of the kind was done. That was my wish. What was bound to happen, happened. You do not yet know how weak, how ridiculously weak, we were at the opening of the campaign in the East. We seemed to be far the more powerful, but we are to this day the weaker in numbers and equipment. It is my fault. It is a malicious untruth to say that our Army did not fight as bravely as any in the chronicles of war. Its banner floats unsullied in the wind, and there

is not a stain of rust on the honour of its arms. It was unscrupulous levity that sent it, badly armed, to execute a bad plan ; yet it fought so that our children might be proud of the deeds of their fathers. Honour it ; leave the disgrace on me, and me only. This campaign was not a trial of the strength of Russia. Would it prove the powerlessness of a giant that he was lulled to sleep by his watchman and, while he still slept, beaten by a dwarf armed to the teeth ? Would this not prove, to the serious observer, only the folly of the sentinel, not the weakness of the giant ? The young giant will refresh himself, and then ye shall see what account of himself he will give with good weapons.

“That ye may live to see it the post of sentinel must be confided to one with better eyes. How could Ilja Murom avoid sleeping in the house of fate when Oblomov had the duty of awakening him ? From every pool of blood an arm, withered to the bone, is raised to heaven in a last, silent complaint ; in the hastily-dug caverns there are angry whispers, and none can understand why suffering and disgrace cannot procure for them a humble approach ; from a hundred million throats arise sighs and curses which seek their object. See ye here. Behold an Emperor who confesses his guilt before all his people, who enters on a pilgrimage in sight of the Christian community, like the meanest criminal, and, with bowed head, says humbly to the ragged beggar, the peasant, the young herdsman : ‘Forgive me, brother, for the sake of Christ’s wounds, forgive thy brother, who was not evil but weak, not malicious

but vain : a man who, in a small way, might have been of some use as father and citizen, but who, with his narrow chest and thin skin, was not born for the dignity of Monomachos and its heroic burdens.'

"Now he has laid them down. The Autocrat has spoken to you for the last time. What else was I to do ? There is nothing in me of that Frederick who, when threatened with shipwreck by the raging tempests, swore to brave the storm and to live or die with the thoughts of a king. My lot would rather be that of a Bajaset II, who, as Sultan, panted along his brief way under the heavy load of a great name, and was, after many sufferings, removed by poison given him by his own son. Like him, I have an ancestor whose nod was law on the Balkans, in the Archipelago, and as far as Hungary and Bohemia. Like him, I spoke of peace, kept away from the Army, and, when the hour of combat struck, was as little prepared to meet the enemy as the weakling Turk was to meet the Bosnians and Venetians. Shall I wait until my janissaries rise against me and seek to murder me in my own house ? No. Of my own free will I have resolved to do what Bajaset was forced to do. That is the only sacrifice I can make for my people, and it is not a small one. Have ye any idea of the bliss of ruling ? The feeling that the fate of millions depends on you and that you have no master but Him whose tongue the priest, our pliant implement, looses ? If ye had, ye would know what it is to freeze at such a height, so near the sun, and feel in your inmost soul : Thine

was the power and thou hast lightly used it to the disadvantage of thy fellows.

“One thing consoles me ; the lasting influence of my sacrifice on the Russian Empire is not slight. It was not Russia that made this peace, but one who from to-morrow will be of no more significance in the history of the Russian people than the poorest peasant in some remote village. Mine is the guilt, and mine the expiation. So must it be. I longed for peace ; and I reeled, half-drunken, into the most deadly war. I longed for peace and order in the Empire ; and by my constant vacillation I strengthened the spirit of revolt. Then, in order to repress it, I needed a victory, and asked it of my commander, pressing him more urgently from day to day. In vain did he implore me to give him time, that he might not only collect his Army, but work with it and accustom it to its new duties. In vain. He must conquer, speedily and brilliantly. He must alter his plan, abandon his cleverly devised retreat, which would have fatally lengthened the enemy’s lines of communication, boast loudly of the forces at his command, and engage wherever the battle was forced on him. For the Tsar could wait no longer. The Tsar was crying loud over the earth : ‘No peace except after a decisive victory of our troops!’ Privately he was saying : ‘Please give me a victory, commander.’ Now he has made peace after a terrible reverse, without the slightest success in arms. He cannot assuage the suffering that the war has caused. He leaves behind him a smaller legacy than he received ; he has made

the Empire, of which the most powerful spoke with quiet respect, the butt of jeers. But he takes with him on his solitary way the disgrace of this peace.

“God bless my good beginning ! And do thou, St. Andrew, Patron of Russia, look favourably on it. Here, amongst other majestic decorations, is the ensign of the Order founded in thy name, of which I have been an unworthy knight. Thy name denotes that thou art male ; whereas I should have been most fitly dressed in women’s garments. As a man of peace thou didst penetrate fearlessly into the wilds of Scythia to preach the Saviour ; and I acted like Simon Peter, thy brother, and forswore the sacred thing at the very hour for confessing it. Never more, then, shall I deck myself in the green velvet mantle with silver border ; never more shall the red feather rise in my knightly hat. For the last time I press my lips to the golden figure of the two-headed eagle, which bears the blue cross of St. Andrew, and touch devoutly once more the cross to which thou wert attached, crucified like thy Master, and read again on the corners the Roman letters which were explained to me in my childhood : S. A. P. R. Never again. ‘For loyalty and faith.’ I often read it between the eight rays of the silver star. To whom was I loyal ? Not to myself, even to this day. There was nothing in common between me and thee. Yet, see, now I take up my cross. Was thine heavier ? I will make a pilgrimage to Achaia, and on the spot where thou didst suffer martyrdom will ask the wind,

that has bent the stalks for centuries, from the gloomy depths of my remorse whether it saw thee smile until the last moment.

“I go without anger, though not with a light heart: a repentant man, not an accuser nor one condemned unjustly. I have left the crown to my young son Alexej. God protect the Tsar! The administration of the Empire I leave to my brother Michael Alexandrovitsch. He will have plenty to do, but his arms are free: hatred and disdain have never reached him, and his conscience is clear. He is not bound in any way, for he has betrayed no trust, and my wish—the wish of the Autocrat—is that even tender brotherly love shall not wed him to such of his predecessor’s ideas as he cannot in conscience approve. It is now his province, and his care, to find what is best for the nation and the Empire. To only one pronouncement of the Autocrat have I bound him, as we shook hands—to the Imperial promise to summon good men, freely elected by the people, for the preparation and discussion of new laws; men of every class, not merely of the higher and middle nobility which controls the Zemstvos, Lutherans, Roman and Armenian Christians, Mohammedans, Raskolniks, Jews, Buddhists, and Pagans, men in the peasant’s smock and in the artisan’s blouse. Apart from this he is free; to this one resolution of my own I hold him. For this consoling promise to free at last from the curse of their eternal stupidity the broad-browed servants of God whose sweat and blood have for so many centuries enriched the seed of

Ruric, has already gone out into the remotest huts, is discussed with intelligence and seriousness by the fireside and at the church door, and even in the icy crust itself sows the germ of a new hope. Russia will mourn like a bride abandoned in her wedding finery if this promise be not fulfilled. If one were thus to deceive the people he would forfeit their confidence for ever. And this confidence is needed by Michael Alexandrovitsch, henceforth the protector of this realm. May he retain it. May he never turn a deaf ear to the voices that reach him in his elevation. Russia desires a master. But Russia is ready to help this master with its counsels in his heavy work, and is weary of the shameful yoke under which it has been kept by interested servants of the Emperor, like a stupid beast. Let Michael arm himself with a will of steel, and then deck the bright harness with the fresh spring flowers of the black earth ; let him be a strong father to the people, yet at the same time the loving little father who greets the shepherd-boy in the meadow and the raftsman on the river with a friendly ' Thou ' : an orthodox Christian, ever ready to act, compassionate, and cheerful. And let him never forget, in pain and pleasure, that the supreme rule belongs only to the man who can maintain order. His brother failed to do it.

"Was it not so predicted many a year ago ? Did not Father John of Cronstadt make some such prophecy ? Did he not say that once more a Nicolai Alexandrovitsch would be Autocrat, but not for long ; he should be useless and leave the crown

to his stronger brother Michael? Only a delicate child stands between the prophecy and its fulfilment. Nicolai Alexandrovitch died to the throne of the Tsars after a short, restless, and unrest-provoking career. He lives again in the legend: the false Nicolai beside the false Dmitri. The man who was struck in his youth by a Japanese at Otsu, and was, in his manhood, driven from the throne by an unprecedented blow of the Japanese. The man who, on the day of his coronation, saw three thousand men trampled underfoot on the Chodynka-field by their Christian brethren, and trodden into bloody masses of flesh steaming in the mud. The man who would establish peace on earth, and soon afterwards had a hundred thousand of his subjects slain on the field of battle, and was compelled, on the day of the shepherds' announcement, to bid his soldiers aim at the breasts of their compatriots. The man who, though still young in years, voluntarily abdicated his majesty, to deliver Russia from the disgrace of a humiliating peace. No master for us, yet not a bad man. Unfortunate. He sinned, and did penance. For Christ's sake he was forgiven. Where he went, and when he died, no one knows. No one must know. Since his departure things have improved in the Empire, and to-day no Russian need be ashamed when he recalls the Peace of Kioto. God protect the Tsar! May the Holy Mother of God bless the heart of our master!"

Thus would Nicolai speak if the welfare of Russia were more to him than the throne of Russia. He

has not done it. His own mother found him too weak for the throne, but he remained. He wished, though he had not the stature, to sustain the burden of an Autocrat, the Autocracy of the Gossudar of All the Russias. And, conscious as he is of the purest innocence, he has never been able to understand why fate has entwined the crown of thorns of the martyr for him, for one so gentle and so pious.

FRANCIS JOSEPH

THE Emperor Ferdinand of Austria survived the fall of Metternich only about six months. After the revolt at Vienna in May he had gone to Innsbruck ; after the October rising, of which the Minister of War, Latour, was the victim, he fled from his undermined capital to quiet Olmütz. Radetzsky's victory at Custozza, which reunited Lombardy to the Empire, had emboldened the good-natured weakling to return to the court from the Tyrol, after three months' absence, but fresh Job's messengers soon poured in. Windisch-Graetz had restored order with fire and sword at Prague, but a spark still glimmered in the ashes and the smoking ruins, and nervous fingers were raised to heaven in oaths of vengeance. In Hungary the descendants of Zrinyi, the oppressed Croats, had arisen against the insolence of the Magyars under their Banus Jellacic ; the Archduke Palatine Stephen was driven out of the country, the Reichstag remained in assembly in spite of dissolution by the Vienna court, and Louis Kosuth, as President of the Association for the Defence of the Country, ruled like a king beyond the Leitha. The troops which Jellacic called to Hungary to strengthen his power had scarcely left Vienna when the fire broke out once more, and could not be as speedily extinguished as in March. The Reichsrath,

which was conceived as *constituante*, was postponed and ordered to meet at Kremsier in the middle of November. Windisch-Graetz had to help once more ; to pacify with the sword, first Vienna, then Buda-Pesth. Prince Felix Schwarzenberg formed a new Ministry (which afterwards included Schmerling), with Stadion and Bach.

In spite of all their exertions they could not secure peace, and many already predicted the fall of the Empire of the Habsburgs, when a woman conceived a bold resolution. Friderike Dorothea Sophie, the daughter of the first King of Bavaria, Maximilian Joseph, who was married to the Archduke Francis Charles of Austria, had recognised that neither the weak-minded Emperor Ferdinand nor her own husband, as next of kin, could deliver Austria from its difficulties. This able, strong, and ambitious woman forced both men, by her biting language, to abdicate, and secured the throne for her eldest son, the eighteen-year-old Francis Joseph, on December 2, 1848. From Olmütz Count Prokesch von Osten, who was the Austrian Ambassador at Athens, wrote on March 3, 1849, to his wife : "The memory of the conduct of the Empress [Anna] in the days of the great revolution enshrines her with the glory of a saint. She insisted firmly on the abdication, saying : 'The Emperor has suffered ignominy and can no longer be Emperor?' She fought the point with the most admirable behaviour, with an imperial dignity and radiant beauty. The much misunderstood Archduchess Sophie, with her stricken heart and sound intelligence, brought about

the change of ruler. The monarchy is deeply indebted to her. She does not stir from her present position beside her son, and she is quite right. Amongst right-minded people there is only one opinion about her. Everybody appreciates her intellect, character, and courage. The Banus [Jellacic] has had some really great moments. The greatest was, perhaps, when, loaded with honour and praise, he left Innsbruck and read in the papers two days afterwards that he was charged with high treason, this charge having been wrung from the Emperor [Ferdinand]." That was the situation, once. Of the new court Prokesch writes: "I waited on the Emperor and was invited to dinner. The Archduchess Sophie did the honours at table. The Emperor sits between his father and mother [Francis Charles and Sophie], and next to them is Prince Felix [Schwarzenberg]; the younger Archdukes come next. The whole position is military, but without constraint. The weakness of the court has disappeared, and there is dignity and strength in the seriousness of the whole group. I am convinced that this court has a magical influence on everybody. All are young and earnest; the importance of the times is seen on every countenance. No cold and formal phrases: living, confident language and everything fearlessly called by its proper name. Difficult as our position is, I hope for the best. We have first to establish a belief in the new Austria abroad. Here it is clear, but there is much old-fashioned stubbornness in the ministerial offices. A new generation must grow up."

Three years afterwards (the weakness of Prussia had since that time made things easier for the young Francis Joseph at Olmütz ; the constitution passed at Kremsier was dropped, Hungary was annexed with the aid of Russia, Felix Schwarzenberg was dead and replaced by Buol), the Emperor was seen by the man who was supposed to be Prokesch's strongest and most resolute opponent in the Frankfort Bundestag. In May 1852, Frederick William summoned Herr von Bismarck from Frankfort to Potsdam, and gracefully informed him that he was chosen to represent Prussia at Vienna, the high school of diplomacy, where he would have the best opportunity to continue his studies. In the letter of appointment (written by the King himself) we read : " Herr von Bismarck-Schönhausen comes of a noble stock which has been in our marches longer than my own house, and has ever given proof of its ancient virtues, especially in him. We owe to his fearless and energetic conduct in the bad times of recent years the preservation and improvement of the better condition of our flat lands. It is pleasant to me to reflect that Your Majesty will make the acquaintance of a man who is respected by many, and hated by many, in this country on account of his noble and deliberate obedience and his implacable opposition to the revolution in all its branches. He is my friend and loyal servant and comes to Vienna with the fresh, living, and sympathetic impression of my principles, my methods, my will, and, I may add, my affection for Austria and Your Majesty. Herr von Bismarck comes from

Frankfort, where what the intermediate States, full of their Rheinbund idea, enthusiastically call the differences of Austria and Prussia have always been most strongly echoed and have sometimes originated, and he has kept a sharp and just eye on these things. I have enjoined him to answer every question put to him by Your Majesty and your ministers just as if I put them myself."

Bismarck found the "monosyllabic" Ministry, Buol-Bach-Bruck, in office at Vienna. He met the Emperor at Buda-Pesth. In the evening of June 23 he wrote to his wife: "I have worn a good deal of uniform to-day, have given my credentials in ceremonious audience to the young ruler of this country, and have received a very good impression of him. The fire of a youth of twenty combined with intelligent ease. He can be very winning, as he needs to be. He is exactly what the country needs, and more than enough for the repose of his neighbours, if God does not give him a peace-loving heart." Two days afterwards he wrote to Leopold von Gerlach: "The young ruler of this country has made a very good impression on me; the fire of a youth of twenty combined with the dignity and intelligence of mature age; a fine eye, especially when he is moved, and a winsome impression of candour, especially when he smiles. If he were not Emperor I should consider him rather too serious for his age. The Hungarians are delighted with the national accent with which he speaks their language and the elegance with which he sits his horse." Afterwards King William I of Württemberg

tries at Stuttgart to prejudice the Prussian against Francis Joseph. "The King sent for me as soon as I arrived. He was very bitter against Austria. He regards, not only Buol, but the young Emperor also, as a man of very narrow views, and thinks he has received a Jesuitical and superficial education from Bombelles ; he has learned, he says, incredibly little, and the lack of positive knowledge makes him dependent on the judgment of others. He has not got over the wildness of youth, and since his marriage [with Princess Elizabeth of Bavaria] he lives only for pleasure and avoids business. Nevertheless, if he were a man of any gifts, Buol could not conduct the affairs of Austria so badly as he does. Moreover, he says, Bach and Bruck are so untruthful that his neighbour in Bavaria, who has long been duped by them, has now declared that he will never again believe a word they say. The King said that he would have nothing to do with Austria except when it was in difficulties ; in prosperity it was faithless. Misfortune will not wait long, and then—not before—Germany will be united." This bad opinion of the brother-king did not long influence Bismarck's majestic intelligence. The old man had a very friendly respect for the Emperor, though he had conducted war against him, and sometimes said, recollecting the origin of his Empire, that Sophie had saved the life of Austria as a Great Power in helping her eldest son to the throne at an early age.

The three Coburgers, who at that time discussed *de omni re scibili et quibusdam aliis* in Europe, were

not agreed in their opinions of the young Emperor. Ernest of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, who was eager for popular favour, praised the handsome frame, graceful movements, tact, and talent for military science and languages, of Francis Joseph, and called him a very promising man. "He has certainly a talent for organisation, and it is supported by quick apprehension and an extraordinary memory. If the young man had travelled more and been allowed to see foreign countries, especially Germany, with his own eyes and instruct himself, he would, with his gifts, already be of some consequence. I was astonished at the precision and knowledge with which he treated every subject. He speaks little, but well. He is a master in all the exercises of a noble and is far above the other Archdukes. He seems to unite an unimpassioned and calm consideration of things with decision and firmness in execution. But, however freshly and candidly he enters upon a discussion, he seems to have imposed certain limits on himself and will not easily be carried beyond them. In regard to details he refers always to his ministers. My intercourse with him confirmed my conviction that he has considerable talent for ruling and will prove of great consequence for the ancient State of the Habsburgs."

Leopold, the first King of the Belgians, wrote to his niece Victoria: "I like the young Emperor. Whenever circumstances allow him, he displays an attractive liveliness, and the warm glance of his blue eyes tells of feeling and courage. He is slender and graceful, and has very good manners: equally

devoid of awkward bashfulness and forwardness. He is simple, and does not need to appeal to his authority to keep everybody in order. You see at once that he is master and has the gifts of a master, which cannot be learned or artificially acquired. He can certainly be severe when it is necessary, and his whole manner suggests bravery." Ernest's brother Albert, the Prince Consort, is less friendly : " One cannot expect much of a man who has been educated by the Jesuits. They do not regard the feelings and thoughts of human nature as proper, but always suggest unworthy motives and only see the evil in their fellow-men."

The popular hatred of the Jesuits, which knows nothing, and wishes to know nothing, of the nature and purpose of the world-order, dictated these words. " Of the Emperor of Austria and his policy he always spoke unfavourably," writes Chlodwig Hohenlohe in his diary after a dinner with Prince Albert. He himself, always blind and untruthful, cannot see Francis Joseph aright. After the gala-dinner in honour of the Prussian General von Werder, who has notified at court the accession of William I, the Emperor speaks for a minute or two with the prince, and he goes home and writes : " Seeing the friendly and natural way that the Emperor has of speaking, I regretted in my own mind that he made so little use of this gift in his relations with his subjects. He will not find it possible to become popular with his condescending ways, yet this is very important in dealing with a childish people like the Austrians. The court

appeared at the Citizens' Ball just as we arrived. He was received in silence. People spoke openly of his studied indifference and apparent discontent. The Emperor remained a long time, but in the gallery above, speaking with the Mayor, instead of walking about in the hall and speaking with the citizens, as King Louis and King Max [of Bavaria] always do, to their great advantage." A year later he writes at Frankfort, where Francis Joseph has to preside over the Fürstentag : " The Emperor arrived about six in an open, two-seated carriage. As it was believed that he was coming with a large retinue and eight horses, no one recognised him, and there was no ' Hurrah ! ' as he went by. Frau von Bethmann alone threw a few bouquets from our balcony, but, luckily for the Emperor, they did not reach the carriage." It is always the same insidious wish to prove that Francis Joseph does not understand his business as ruler, and is regarded by the people as an indifferent and unattractive foreigner. So it is until the hour when, at Ischl, he hears the Emperor say of Bismarck : " It is sad to see such a man sink so low " ; and of Caprivi : " God grant that he may remain long at his post." As an expression of Habsburg hope the phrases can be easily understood.

" He is generous." This remark of Julie von Benedek on the Emperor does not say as much as the laudatory speeches of his relatives and servants ; yet possibly it says more. His relation to Ludwig von Benedek fills a sombre chapter in the life of

Francis Joseph. Who was to lead the Austrian army against Prussia? The Commander, Benedek, had long dreaded this war: he had said in 1856 to Hohenlohe that he would regard it as a great misfortune for Austria. Its army seemed to him quite unfitted for such a struggle. "Old, feeble, or accommodating generals in command or higher commanders are always a great evil, and I can only wish and repeat incessantly, at the close of my career as a soldier, that our gracious Emperor and King may as quickly as possible overcome the sympathy and tenderness of his noble heart and make sweeping changes in the higher charges of his army. The best armies require, especially at such a time as this, iron yet supple hands in all their higher commanders." The reform was not carried out, and Benedek had to lead the army, whose chiefs he so much distrusted, against a powerful enemy. It was not like the Italian war, for which he was prepared, but a war against the Prussian Commander-in-Chief, in a country that was almost wholly unknown to him. His experience was, says the Prussian General von Schlichting, "like that of a pilot who has all his life guided small boats over the shallows and by the rocks of his native bay with unsurpassable skill and knowledge of the locality, and has now for the first time to take a warship of the first class across strange seas and through cyclones of which he has had no experience." Why was he chosen? Because the Archduke Albrecht, the other candidate, had been unpopular since he had taken command in the street-fighting

at Vienna and was disliked in Hungary since the time of his governorship ; because his appointment as Commander-in-Chief in the Bohemian War would have prompted the crowd to say that the bourgeois general was sacrificed in favour of the prince, the son of the Oldenburg physician in favour of the Habsburg Grand Duke ; and because, as Count Moritz Esterhazy constantly repeated, and not without reason, in the Belcredi Cabinet, in this way the dynasty escaped the possibility of its being said afterwards that a son of the House of Habsburg-Lothringen had led the Austrian troops to disaster.

Benedek obstinately resisted his appointment to a position for which he felt himself unfit ; he yielded only when Francis Joseph (as Herr Dr. Heinrich Friedjung tells in his excellent work, "*Benedeks nachgelassene Papiere*") sent word to him through General-Adjutant Count Crenneville that, since public opinion would resent the appointment of any other commander and regard it as a personal fault on the part of the Emperor, he would, if Benedek persisted in his refusal and the war ended badly, be compelled to abdicate. Three abdications in fifteen years ; the dynasty would hardly have survived such a disgrace. The commander replied that he was prepared to sacrifice his honour as a citizen and a soldier to the wish of His Majesty. "In such circumstances I should have acted very wrongly if I had refused the command." He declined, however, the marshal's staff which was offered to him ; "I must earn that on the field of battle," he said. Then, when he was beaten, Francis

Joseph let him fall. The man whom Moltke had called a brave and careful leader of great merit now lay "broken, like an old sword." He knew well what would happen. "How could we face the Prussians! They are men of study and we have learned little." So he said; and he knew why he refused to vindicate himself thoroughly before the Commission of Inquiry at Vienna. Was he to repeat Crenneville's words and tell out before his comrades and the audience that "the position had been forced on him with an appeal to his loyalty as a subject and a soldier"? "No one can humiliate me; and the Emperor knows very well why I made no speech or reply before the Commission. . . . After all that has happened, there is nothing left for me, consistent with my convictions, heart, and character, and my entire devotion to the Emperor, but to accept in silence, with modesty and peace of mind, the censure of writers and talkers. I shall accuse nobody, not defend myself, write nothing, and not say a word to exonerate and justify myself."

He adhered firmly to this resolution; even when, although the proceedings against him were abandoned at the Emperor's orders, it was said in the official *Wiener Zeitung* that Benedek's military reputation was destroyed in the eyes of contemporaries and posterity, and the Emperor had withdrawn his confidence from the commander. It was only in his testament that he expressed his anger: "That the Austrian Government, having in its hands my promise of silence (given to the Archduke Albrecht on November 19, 1866) and believing in the honour-

ableness of my promise, should publish this strange article, in which my whole past was ignored, and that this Government article, which it is impossible to qualify, was conceived in the presidential chancellory of the General Staff, corrected and improved by Field-Marshal Lieutenant Baron John, Field-Marshal Archduke Albrecht, and others, and finally published by order of the Government in all its peculiar features—all this surpasses my ideas of right, decency, and propriety. I suffered it in silence, and I have now for seven years borne my hard lot as a soldier with philosophy and self-denial. I take credit to myself that in spite of it all I feel no anger against anybody and am not soured. I am at peace with myself and the whole world and have a clear conscience ; but it has cost me all my poetic feeling for soldiering. I should like to be borne to my grave with the utmost simplicity and without any military honours. A plain stone or an iron cross, without any wording, must be put over my grave." The faithful servant had, as William of Württemberg said, been duped. Archduke Albrecht had won the confidence of the beaten man ("who had borne the laurel of Custozza in Italy") by praise, had visited him at Gratz, and had, three months after the conclusion of peace at Prague, brought home to Vienna Benedek's promise "to bear everything in silence and take my reflections with me to the grave." The "Commander-in-Chief in a boarding-house" kept his word. He took no part, even indirectly, in any attempt to vindicate his repute as a soldier, and left no memoirs,

although he would have had plenty of leisure to write them since he lived nearly fifteen years after his painful fall.

“My promise,” he wrote in his will, “was, perhaps, premature, possibly even stupid, but the best expression of my character as a soldier.” He had not expected that after this promise he, the victor of San Martino, would be dismissed from the Emperor’s vicinity without a final audience and sent as a scape-goat into the wilderness. He never recovered from this disillusion. Then, when the official pronouncement of the General Staff had condemned him severely, without admitting any extenuating circumstances, he dressed in private clothes and forbade military honours at his funeral. “The Prussian General Staff will justify me,” he said with a sombre smile; “I need not defend myself.” The thought that there was an angry man at Gratz who might, if he were too badly treated, consider himself released from his agreement, made the Emperor uncomfortable. He had succeeded, in his thirty-second year, in reconciling by a few gracious words Prince Clemens Metternich, who had been shamefully sacrificed by Ferdinand’s thankless stupidity. Might the experiment not succeed once more? First Albrecht, son of the hero of Aspern, must make the attempt; he must send to the commander, whose decorations had been stolen by a servant, the commander’s cross of the Theresian Order, which he had won at Novara, and other decorations, and address him in the accompanying letter as a brave soldier, a loyal comrade-in-arms, and a trusty friend on many

a famous battlefield. Then, as Benedek had thanked them with cold respect, he wrote a second letter from Gdow, where Benedek had conquered in February 1846, against the Galician insurgents, as "an old campaigner, a grateful brother-in-arms, and sincere friend," in which he reminded Benedek in glowing terms of this first success he had won as a leader. Again the effort was unsuccessful. The boarding-house lodger may have reflected, as he read the letter which hailed him as the restorer of Austria's military glory, that the panegyrist had co-operated in writing the shameful article of four years ago.

Francis Joseph saw that he must use stronger means. In July 1873, he ordered the fifteen-year-old Crown Prince Rudolf to visit the commander at Gratz. He was not at home, and, in spite of his wife's entreaties, would not answer Rudolf's letter; but he allowed himself to be persuaded by General Major Latour, the military tutor of the Crown Prince, and expressed his thanks "for the great favour shown to me, which I appreciate to the full." He also asked Latour to thank the Emperor "for the graceful way in which he has remembered me." Peace? Benedek did not alter his will, which had been written three weeks before he received Rudolf's letter. "I am an isolated man; I need no external honour, and I feel that my internal honour is unstained. In this I acknowledge no earthly judge." He was not reconciled, but merely pledged afresh. When the German Chancellor expressed his sincere sympathy to the widow, when Benedek died of

cancer of the larynx, she wrote to her nephew : " Bismarck's letter, written throughout with his own hand, was the only one from a high personage that touched me ; the telegrams from the Emperor and the Archduke left me very cold. When the Emperor sent the Crown Prince to us in 1873 as an apostle of conciliation, Benedek had suffered so much during the seven years that he refused everything and begged that they would not disturb the repose he had at last attained. The Emperor, always generous, had at least the goodness to ask if there was nothing he could do for me. He is generous. I thanked him sincerely : I need nothing."

Generous ! Julie von Benedek did not mean to praise the Emperor either for a large heart or an open hand, but merely for a noble feeling, even in hours of weakness and confusion, that shrank from the appearance of unworthy and unprincely conduct. Francis Joseph was never small-minded, either at home or in the State. He gave the greatest possible liberty to his wife, in spite of her fanaticisms ; he made Count Julius Andrassy, who had been condemned for high treason and hanged in effigy, his Premier ; he had granted all who conducted international affairs, from Schwarzenberg to Aehrenthal, the nimbus of independent action ; he had invited to court Louis Kossuth's son, in spite of his fierce language against the rights of the Habsburgs ; and he was not prevented by any malicious or silly chatter from acting openly as a good friend to an actress whose ways pleased him. He wished to rid his relation to Benedek, which exhibits so clearly

his strength and his inflexible consideration for reasons of State, of the appearance of a petty quarrel. He forced the supreme command on him, in spite of his resistance, in order not to burden the dynasty with the oppressive load of the responsibility for an unsuccessful war. Could he let the fact be known ? The evil that he wished to avoid would have been doubled. "The Emperor chose the general as commander, though he declared himself unfit for the position, and so caused the disaster which put an end to our hopes in Germany" ; whether the Habsburg was in a sufficiently strong position in the autumn of 1866 to survive such talk among the people it is now difficult to say. Francis Joseph was not confident of his position ; and he had learned from the Jesuits, the fathers of the Kalksburg school, that a praiseworthy end justifies the means, and that the servant who is employed in important work must, according to Ignatius Loyola, allow himself to be led and treated by his superior just as if he were a corpse. (It is their injunction to sacrifice every private interest, happiness, or honour mercilessly to the common good, and, as the High Priests did at Jerusalem, rather see an innocent man suffer than the community, that has drawn so much popular hatred on the Constitutions of the Society of Jesus.) The end was attained, and the dynasty spared a very serious reproach ; and Benedek must bear his fate. But Bombelles and his assistants had also told the youth of Aquaviva, the third successor of Ignatius, who instructed superiors to temper force of will with mildness.

When the danger to the ruling house was averted, therefore, the man who had been sacrificed might be favoured, and should not be allowed to nurse his anger in a corner. Machiavelli would have rejoiced to see such virtue in a ruler.

Bismarck, who knew men, spoke of the Emperor of Austria as "an honourable nature," and said that it was only Buol's personal vindictiveness that impelled the young monarch to his ungrateful conduct toward Nicolai Pavlovitch after the aid given by the Russians at Vilagos ("a service such as scarcely any monarch has ever rendered to a neighbouring State"). That was one of the many blunders which he committed in regard to persons; things he knew well. Francis Joseph wished to prevent the Russian forces from penetrating to the Balkans; he was steeped in Metternich's principle, that Turkey is the safest frontier for Austria—"safer than the sea"—and on that account, of his own initiative, he declared the proposal of Orlov, that the protective control of the impending Balkan States should be divided between Russia and Austria, a deviation from the agreement with Nicholas at Olmütz and Warsaw, and made it a pretext for departing from the neutrality he had promised. The Tsar had saved Hungary for him five years before and had not asked the slightest recognition. But personal feeling was not to be admitted when the interest of the Empire was at stake. Honour and gratitude are bourgeois virtues which the ruler of a State cannot include in his luggage every time he moves. Alexander von Hübner, the representa-

tive of Austria at Paris, judged the Emperor more correctly than Bismarck. "Severe pricks of conscience," he wrote in his diary, "will not prevent him from doing his duty to his people." They never did prevent him. (Which deserves praise, not blame; an emotional man, who is always anxiously considering whether he is in accord with every claim of Philistine domestic morality, is not fit for the high position of one who has to secure the future of a nation against an unscrupulous enemy.)

The man who sees in this Emperor a good honest soul, without malice or talent for ruling, does not know history. The grandson of Francis has received a considerable legacy from the rich hereditary treasure of Habsburg craftiness. Did not the art with which he vacillated between east and west before the Crimean War prove his innate astuteness? Was it not seen in the artful way in which he, in August 1863, won the King of Prussia to the idea of the Frankfort Fürstentag? He had visited William at Gastein, and, while Bismarck, the opponent of his plan for the strengthening of Austrian power over Germany, watched the feeding of a titmouse under the pines of the Schwarzenberg Park, he stirred up the Emperor's old antipathy to Parliaments. Prince Kraft zu Hohenlohe-Ingelfingen, who attended on the King as Adjutant, says in his memoirs: "The whole conversation had the appearance of dealing with a vague idea which would be carried out at some remote date. But it was inconsistent with this that the Emperor said aloud

to our King before everybody, when he was leaving : ' We shall see each other in Frankfort, then.' It was a clever manœuvre ; it was intended to spread the rumour that the two monarchs had fixed a definite meeting at Frankfort." Bismarck had to use his strongest arguments for hours at Baden-Baden, and at last hint at resignation, before he could induce him to abandon it, and he reflected, when he went home about midnight, " ill and exhausted by the nervous strain of the situation " : " If I had not lingered so long studying natural history in the deep gorge of the Ache, and had seen the King earlier, the first impression which the words of the Emperor made on the King might have been different."

Purely personal successes of this kind were not rare in the life of Francis Joseph. It is said at the court that the old man still blushes when duty compels him, the monarch and head of the Habsburg-Lorraine house, to tell an untruth. But he has never failed in that duty, or any other duty, wittingly. He shows himself when it is necessary, comes to the capital daily from quiet Schönbrunn, unless some other arrangement is made, speaks to ministers and delegates, officers and officials, manufacturers and merchants, in all the languages of the various kingdoms and countries represented in the Reichsrath—even speaks Magyar and Croat in public—and receives every visitor with promptness and conscientiousness. During manœuvres he still sleeps and lives like every other general. In the autumn of 1909 he answered from the saddle, when

the heir to the throne asked him to lunch quietly with him and the German Emperor : " A roll and a glass of wine ; I never take more during manœuvres and need not leave my horse for that." In the stern school of hardship he has learned the lesson of self-denial, and can sacrifice his private wishes without complaint or annoyance ; not merely sacrifice a part of his holidays at Ischl when the Czechs and Magyars give trouble. For several decades he has refrained from personal intercourse with the Pope in order not to annoy the House of Savoy. He has certainly often wished to transfer the succession to the throne from the children of his brother Louis to the descendants of his favourite daughter, Marie Valerie. But as he once opposed the idea of changing the law of the house in this way, when Francis Ferdinand's stepmother surprised him with the question, he has never returned to the secret wish of his heart. He bears patiently, with a smile, the interference of the heir to the throne (who is often impetuous) in State affairs, though it is not always happy. He is always the master.

He can smile : he can keep silence ; he can maintain his will through tiresome delays and hesitations. It is possible that the constructive mind in this slim, still almost erect, frame is not above the average. With that he has a considerable gift for ruling. There must be such a gift in a man who has the courage bluntly or cunningly to rule out personal consideration in case of need, yet seem a pattern of amiable innocence to near (not to the nearest) and far. During the time that he

has worn the crown Austria has been driven out of Italy and Germany, and almost cut off from the oldest root of the power of his house; troops of ministers have, often without any fault on their part, been driven from power amid hatred and contempt. Domestic misfortunes were added to political. Elizabeth and Rudolf, Johann Orth and the handsome Otto, Luise and Leopold of Tuscany; after a time each moon seemed to be heavy with painful memories. The soul of the Emperor, ever tranquil in its depths, braved every storm. He did not suffer the pain to master him, but smiled and was silent; even in his own house he proved to those who doubted it that in his age he had not lost his will.

“When a man is old and has attempted so much and things never come right, he must be satisfied in the end.” That is what Goethe’s Egmont says of Philip. Francis Joseph was never satisfied; and when he entered bravely on his ninth decade of life, it looked as if the Habsburg Empire was about to attain peace. Hungary was annexed, and thrown back on Denk’s and Andrassy’s schemes of agreement; the monarchy was a great Balkan Power with many suitors; the war that had brought the heir to the throne into the field had been honourably avoided; the heat of the Bohemia-Moravia struggle was subsiding. What was there to sigh for at Olmütz, Kremsier, or Königgrätz? The quiet, modest-looking old gentleman, neatly clad, conspicuous neither by his talents nor by a lack of tact, keeping himself young by moderation and the

careful discharge of small duties, may still smile : even more freely than in the spring-time of his youth. Aged kings are always tenderly loved by their people, unless the weight of their personality engenders a little hatred. This man's aged brow is crowned by the love of all with a zeal that never flags. And he will be prepared to say, when he looks back upon his experience of life, as he has so often said after festivals and useful ceremonies, without fear of banality or repetition : " It was very fine. I liked it very much."

ALBERT OF SAXONY

IN good houses, built by comfortable men and embodying some germ of inherited culture, one often sees an old Saxon cup appear on the table about vesper-time. In Parvenupolis it is put in the glass case where precious pieces of pottery—Japanese, Henri II, Delft, Sèvres, Nymphenburg, Wedgwood, and Capo di Monte—show off against each other. There it stands, the frail monument of an epoch of which the owner has no ancestral tree to remind him. The man whose father, perhaps, still lived on the soft fringe of the old royal city has bought the Saxon cup for much money from some dealer, and now guards it carefully against all the perils of use. In old houses, however, which have a history and a family pride, and do not owe their prosperity to a lucky hour of gambling, it is put before the worthy guest on the damask cover of the coffee-table. The mother gave it to her daughter, or the bride of her son, or, perhaps, her granddaughter, and the cook has learned to respect the old relic. No crack, or chip in the edge, offends the eye; even the slender handle is uninjured. It is a gracefully arched handle, and the well-bred man will grasp it respectfully, with polite fingers. The shining turkey-cock beak looks as if it were going to crow; that is all there is, and one likes it all the

more on that account. The whole thing looks patrician, neat, delightfully out-of-date. It is either of Böttger porcelain, red, with flowers of Japanese design, or genuine Meissen, white, with gay garlands, a little reddish brown above and below, which spreads in touches to below the beak, where it swells into a porcelain crop ; and it is never without a lid, a cap with a thick knob. Rococo, but German, not conjuring up pictures of gallantry and the erotic play of shepherdesses. One may think of the ghosts of the alchemists, or of the Polack splendour of Augustus II and the wild, tyrannical days when Aurora's powerful friend let his Meissen sorcerer be found on the Albrechtsburg, for the greater glory of the Polish King, and make kaolin. The legitimate heir of Augustus had not a soft bed ; and Aurora of Königsmark afterwards became a prioress and composed cantatas. A sad story. The old Saxon mug has perhaps lived through it, yet its jolly round form does not evoke sorrow. When Augustus bartered away the crown-rights and the remnant of his estates, things were better ; the Saxon meadow is green, the wheels rattle along, the chimneys smoke, and there is no complaint of the coffee. *Providentiæ memor* is the motto on the badge of the Order of the house, guarded by two lions. Providence will see that all is well at the right time. You must trust the times, even when they are bad, and in no circumstances must you hang your head. That is the lesson of the old Saxon mug. Not a particularly valuable or showy piece ; but the expert knows its worth.

In some such way, as an honourable relic, comforting the restless eye, reminding one of earlier days of changing fortune, did the Germans who were born after '48 regard Albert, King of Saxony. When they read that he lay on a sick-bed, unable to make the least movement without great pain, in Sibyllenort, the Tudor palace which William of Brunswick had left him, all Germany fixed their anxious eyes on his couch and implored Heaven to spare Albert's life. That is the gossip of reporters, an indiscriminating thing, distorting every intimate expression of human feeling with some worn phrase. Even a paid servant would hardly count Albert among the great men on whose life the fate of a people depended. The Saxons themselves never spoke of him with overpowering emotion ; only with quiet regard, as of a good master with whom one could live. Beyond the green and white columns at the frontier little was known of him. He was believed to be a good soldier, and Moltke spoke of him, when he was Crown Prince, as the one Field-Marshal of the German army. But Moltke could use the language of diplomacy when there was question of princes, and we have grown to distrust the martial fame of princes since even the Crown Prince Frederick William became a mighty hero. Gravelotte, Nouart, and Mont Avron had long been forgotten, and Albert's ability as a commander was merely appreciated occasionally in transient after-dinner speeches. He was said to be a good administrator, and hearts beat more rapidly at table in his family when it was said that the King was a

good écarté-player, pleased as a freshman in his first term when he had made a grand with four. Écarté: that does not sound like the eighteenth century. In other respects Albert was rococo to us young Germans. He suited Pillnitz, suited the modest grace of a place that might have served as a hedge against all attempts at modernisation. He was greeted everywhere, possibly because he was seen so rarely. He only appeared where he thought it was necessary, and then he did his duty. A type of monarch that Germans will never see again in the Empire passed away with him. New forms have come into fashion; just as new ceramic types have come in, more showy than those of the Böttger-time. Still the old Saxon cups have their worth. They are of good, lasting material, do not seek to look finer than they are, and, where a tradition guards them from rough usage, need not shrink from the light of our day of aeroplanes.

It was not entirely easy to be King of Saxony in 1873. Johann Philalethes, with his Beust and his Trias idea, had pretty well destroyed all that there was left to destroy of Saxony's position as a German Power. It is true that the chief sin had been committed long before: when Frederick Augustus turned his back on the Reformed Church in order to crown his vanity with the royal ornaments of Sobieski. It was only as an individual that he wished to become Catholic, but he surrounded his son with astute Jesuits who saw to it that the prince also should join the Roman Church. In this way the

Albertine line was estranged from the Evangelical faith, the princely stock deviated from the path of the Reformation which had brought it fame and might lead it to the height of dynastic power. Had the decision of Frederick the Wise and John the Constant been respected, instead of being sacrificed to the whim of an unscrupulous voluptuary, the way would have been smoothed for Saxony to become the first Lutheran Power in Germany, whereas among the Catholic Powers it had to fear the rivalry of Catholic Austria or Bavaria on the one hand, and of Prussia on the other.

However, it was not necessary in 1866 to adopt a party so blindly. Albert, the Crown Prince, would, perhaps, have acted otherwise ; he had already said in his twenty-second year that the union he hoped to see could only be brought about by the co-operation of all the German States. Seventeen years later he had to join his Saxons to the Clam-Gallas corps, and return from Bohemia with a beaten army. When he ascended the throne, the unity was won, the Empire founded ; but he ruled a country in which fifty-nine out of every hundred inhabitants were Lutherans. Such a difference in creed between the people and their prince is always dangerous, and the distrust of the Lutheran Saxons has never been allayed. A Crown Prince of the Albertine line, they complained, was bound by an old promise to profess the Reformed faith, but the Roman clergy secretly and astutely secured that after the change of creed of Augustus the Strong no heir to the crown should come from his mother's womb a Crown Prince. It

took all Albert's old-fashioned tact to prevent conflicts and gradually ensure that the sectarian feud should become almost imperceptible. The priests had no power at his court (their power was, at all events, not visible), and the non-Catholics only began to stir when the bad news came from Sibyllenort. It was only at a later period that it was discovered how deeply the Saxons hated Romanism ; when the pious hallucination spread that a trap had been set by the clergy for the Crown Princess Louisa (whose irregularities the good folk refused to believe), the court and the country fell out. Under Albert's rule this domestic and national scandal would have been inconceivable. . . .

That was not the only difficulty that John's son had to overcome when he became King. He had grown up with a strong sentiment of attachment to Austria and an inborn antipathy to Prussia, and was now to be a prince in a Germany from which Austria was excluded. In June 1866 his army-order had assured the Austrians that they would find him by their side in good times and bad ; now, though a personal friend of Francis Joseph, he might be compelled to lead his contingent against the Austrian troops. Even as Crown Prince, however, he adapted himself bravely to the new age. His unswerving fidelity to the Empire and the modesty of his character are plainly seen in the letter which he wrote to Bismarck twenty days after his accession. "To whom," we read, "can I turn better than to the Chancellor of the German Empire, who has so often said that he belongs equally to all the allied

princes ? Hence I approach you in full confidence when I need help or good advice. Do you, on the other hand, be assured ; all that you undertake for the good of the Empire and the German people will be as strongly supported by me as my slender resources enable me, and I trust to be a useful member and a firm support of the structure which I have been called upon to sustain with the sword. Asking you not to take amiss these lines, which may disturb you in your Tusculum, I remain, your devoted Albert." No boasting, no fine phrasing : the plain expression of a feeling of inadequacy, and at the same time the clear acknowledgment where to seek a strong and ready adviser in case of need. Thus did the King by the grace of God, write to the "hodman of William the Great" : the Saxon to the exponent of higher Prussian policy, the victorious advance of which had robbed him of many a hope ; the Catholic to the heretic, who was cursed by a thousand priestly tongues at Rome. We no longer find this note in the letters of our princes ; it seems to come from afar, like the last echo of a submerged world, of which only old men who have passed beyond the hope of power still speak when they meet.

Yet this King, who could remain so modest, and so free from the hatred with which legitimate rulers have almost always persecuted genius, this old-fashioned monarch has lived through the most modern developments of our age. His country became the chief centre of great industries, the thickly populated region of the new machine-working

proletariat, the manœuvre-field of Social Democracy. All that was strange to him, and he often wondered how it was that towns which greeted him so respectfully sent red revolutionaries to the Reichstag. He kept quiet, however. Not so much because he was a subtle politician, and said to himself that, since there must now always be a Radical party, it would be easiest to put up with one that believed in the omnipotence of evolution, avoided violence, and was so sure of victory that it did not think of fighting for it; his ideas did not rise so high as that. No; he kept quiet because it seemed to him the first duty of a King. A word might be snapped up, a sigh reported outside. No one ever heard him complain or threaten in public. He did not, and could not, understand the modern world; yet he kept silent and turned away when the spectacle hurt him. In the depths of their hearts, he might reflect, even the "reds" are very good fellows and good Saxons, and I must try so to behave as not to alienate them from me and my house.

Saxon governments have often acted very imprudently since the proletarian movement grew so rapidly and frightened the feudal lords of the factories, but the King has not been pledged to any of them. He, a Catholic, was loved by the Lutherans; he was loyal to the Empire, and Separatists looked askance at him; he appointed ministers whose social intelligence seemed to descend from the Ice Age, yet the oppressed spoke of him with respect, with tenderness sometimes, and even in hours of passionate agitation one scarcely ever read a word

that could offend the King. As a boy he had heard of the riots at Dresden and Leipsic, which had overthrown the hated Count Einsiedel and barred the way to the throne against Prince Maximilian, and as a youth he had known of the Leipsic parade-trouble, the result of the prince's policy, and the effects of the February revolution, which had come very close to the palace. He was by no means inattentive to these lessons. It is best for princes, he felt, to remain behind the golden lattice that separates them from the passions of the hungry and the fight for power and plunder ; to avoid the chance of doing wrong and assert only their right to do good. He let the Government govern and communicate his wishes to the people at the elections, and he gladly availed himself of every opportunity to right an injustice and grant a petition. Hunting and cards occupied much of his leisure ; food and drink he took in moderation, as he suffered for a long time from a painful disorder of the bladder, which had also tormented William. He smoked the strongest Virginia cigars. The economic interests of his people occupied him very seriously, and, together with Francis Joseph, he won the Emperor to the idea of the commercial treaties which did so much for the textile industries of Saxony. But he never felt any desire to speak on political matters or express his views to his people. He was silent. He could afford to be silent ; he was King.

The old man had another grave trial. Bismarck, to whom he had looked with unswerving confidence, was dismissed, and the personal will of the Emperor

was put forward so emphatically that people began abroad to speak of the Emperor of Germany and hardly thought of the allied princes, of whom the first had, it is true, received the presidency of the Union and the title of German Emperor, but not the rights of an imperial monarch. Day after day people spoke of the Emperor, nothing but the Emperor. The birth of the Empire in 1871 had necessitated a Cæsarian operation, which brought the delicate child into the world. But the two men who had successfully conducted this operation had seen Prussia's darkest days; they appreciated the antipathies of the various German peoples, which survived among the country pupils at the High Schools, and knew what a sacrifice it would cost the sovereign princes to surrender a large part of their inherited rights to the son of stock that had begun so modestly. William and Bismarck were agreed in trying to reserve the imperial idea for especially grave or especially festive occasions. The allied princes had become accustomed to this idea (others may say that they had become accustomed to the voluntary restraint of the old Emperor), and there was bound to be some feeling of discomfort when these things were altered, and they found their less brilliant conduct dimmed by the blaze of the Emperor's glory, suddenly bursting out in one spot after another. No one now spoke of them. No one looked to them for the fate of the Empire which they had co-operated in creating, or ascribed to them either a decisive or partial influence on its fortunes. They seemed to exist now only to stand about the

throne of this one prince on festive occasions, while he filled the world with his words and his resolutions, and, in a country whose princes had made common cause, he heaped the treasures of historic fame with a greedy hand on his own Hohenzollern house.

A grave trial. King Albert bore it. There were many things that displeased him, and his intimates saw him shake his white head. After 1890 there was always some inconsiderable friction ; not merely at the time of the dispute about the Lippe succession, which the Saxon settled in opposition to the wish of William II. Once, in private conversation, he observed that the noise of Berlin did not reach his aged ear. The young monarch, he said, might always have the first word ; when he was older he would learn that it is more important for a monarch to have the last word. He foresaw the danger that threatened the Empire, but maintained a correct attitude. He was pleased in 1892 to see how firmly the Saxons adhered to Bismarck, but he himself kept in the background. He would neither fall in with the new fashion nor play the critic ; he would remain the unassailable King and keep free from envy to the end. It was immaterial to him whether he was regarded as influential or powerless in the Empire ; his only concern was to protect the roots of power in his own kingdom. There he could work quietly, and could do useful work, with prudent self-suppression, without endangering the future of the dynasty. No one ever perceived his inclinations or preferences. *Providentiæ memor!* Even the hand that extends from the purple cannot stem the

inevitable development. It assuredly could not be done on the little height where the German muse passes its peaceful life. Albert's residential city was the German centre of the most modern art; there we learned Meunier and Rodin, Van de Velde and Zuloaga. The King did not scold, let it all pass with a smile. Why not? Why pit himself and his will against the age? The good old Saxon art, the products of which look so patrician, so sweetly old-fashioned, kept its value beside the very latest.

BRIAND

It is a hundred and fifty years since the birth of Camille Babeuf. The story of the man is instructive. In his seventeenth year, in 1776, he was apprenticed to a surveyor, and he afterwards became commissary of the land-register in Picardy, and gradually climbed the ladder of his profession; too slowly for his ambition. He sees the mass of the people suffer, hears them groan impatiently under the yoke, reads Rousseau, Mably, Morelly, and other social moralists, and decides to join the movement which is preparing the destruction of the existing order of things. He first calls himself François Noel, as it sounds mild, then Gracchus Babeuf, because it sounds fiercer, and the Romans are again in fashion. He goes to Paris; praises, in words that Rousseau supplied, the state of nature, the glory of which is disfigured by our abominable society; joins the stormers of the Bastille; and, when the wrath of the people has swept away the tyrants, founds a journal to which, after many initial difficulties, he gives the title *Le Tribun du Peuple*. In the terrible year 1793 he is unfortunate. As head of the district of Montdidier, he is accused of forging documents, and condemned to twenty years' imprisonment.

The sentence is quashed by the Appeal Court. Babeuf is free again, but many still think him tainted,

and he can now scarcely hope to play the leading part in politics to which his vanity had looked forward. He remains in the uncomfortable position of Catilina, who was acquitted of the charge of extorting money from the inhabitants of the African province which he governed, but could not attain the dignity of Consul in his soiled robes. As such men have nothing to lose and everything to hope from the fall of the existing system, they are always ready to conspire against the ruling powers. The Jacobin Babeuf sees in the fall of Robespierre the triumph of low trickery, and so violently assails the victor of Thermidor that he is put in prison as one who despises the fundamental principles of the Revolution. There he finds other hungry folk who have not got what they wanted, and therefore believe that it is time to save their country from its perils. A kind of second Convention is formed in the jail. The question is : Is the nation, which thinks itself supreme, really free ? No, they reply ; any man who has studied Rousseau's teaching to the end must see that this supposed equality in law is an illusion as long as a difference in property makes the rich the master of the poor ; that one can only speak seriously of equality when all the citizens of the Republic have an equal amount of property. And what is freedom or brotherhood without equality ? It is not enough now to avenge Robespierre ; far beyond Robespierre's aims stretches the way that leads to the healing herb. Communism alone can help ; only a social revolution can ensure the prosperity of the country. When Babeuf is released and

returns to life, the conspiracy of the "Equals" is ready and only awaits a favourable hour.

In the spring, Barras, one of the five members of the Directoire Exécutif, hears from his smart police-agent Bacon that Babeuf is stirring up the crowd in secret meetings, which are generally held somewhere in the suburbs, and working for the fall of the Directorate ; he has not only a considerable following among the masses but definite promises from General Bonaparte. As the people suffer under the taxes and are dissatisfied with the conciliatory attitude of the Directors and the new suffrage, the matter must not be regarded lightly. The secret organisation already has nearly seventeen thousand names on its lists, preaches the duty of revolution in night-clubs, and is plotting to take the country by surprise. The new Directors are already selected. The carrying out of the plot might be entrusted to Bonaparte. He also is a man with nothing to lose, and therefore the right man for bringing about equality. He would have put himself in opposition to the Convention on the thirteenth of Vendémiaire, in the service of the rebellious Paris section, if he had not been rapidly promoted to the command of a division.

Barras knows his man ; promises him the rank of a commanding general and the supreme command in Italy ; knows that the Corsican will now desert Babeuf and take away with him to the south the hope that the conspirators will make life so difficult for the feeble Directorate that it will again soon require a trusty sword to protect it. The Five,

however, would not wait. General Blondeau is ordered to surround the chief district of the conspirators while the judge Delorme arrests the twelve leaders of the Communists and utterly destroys their nest. The confiscated club-minutes show that Barras had good servants. The Directors were to be deposed on the 22nd Floréal, of the year IV, and put into a provincial prison together with the officers of the General Staff. The conspirators then secured control of the national treasury, restored the Constitution of 1793, held elections for a new National Convention and a new Committee of Safety ; proposed to behead all who resisted and announce to the people that all laws of property were revoked, all private ownership abolished, and the era of " general happiness " was inaugurated. Babeuf writes to the Directors from prison to say that they may now for the first time, since their knowledge of the net of the conspiracy, recognise what power and confidence he had won in the hearts of the people. " Do you fancy your dignity prevents you from treating with me as one power with another ? Show yourselves in your true greatness, and the country is saved. The Republicans will protect you with their bodies. Work for the people, you five rulers, if you feel that you belong to it. Then will I gladly use my power as a tribune, which you now know, to reconcile the people with you. Then you will be sure of your lives."

The lofty tone of the letter is merely amusing, but when Barras and Rewbell recommended leniency and urgently insisted that only the most dangerous

heads should be cut off, and they should not suffer themselves to be driven into fanaticism by the first fright, they were overruled by their colleagues. No weakness, said Carnot : "Death to all who conspired to put us to death ; that is the law of retaliation, and nothing else will put an end to the Jacobin spirit." Carnot would like to erase the fact that he himself once belonged to the Committee of Public Safety. He feels that he has saved the State and ruined the conspiracy. When Barras hesitated, after Bacon's warning, Grizel, who had entered the sect of the Communists, showed Carnot that there was imminent danger, and it was the report of this *agent provocateur* that led to the order of arrest. Shall the merit of this great service now be diminished ? Where there is smoke there is fire. The man who protects suspects cannot complain if he is himself suspected. Barras has more than once received the lieutenant of hussars Germain, who was arrested with Babeuf in the Rue Bleue. In point of fact, was Barras as indifferent to the plot as has been generally believed ? He has told in his memoirs (published by Duruy) with what theatrical display the discussion was conducted in the Directorate. "Charge me if you dare ! I don't fear your accusation ; I demand it. I will speak before the Council of the Five Hundred and show which of us has forgotten and abused the dignity of his office." He feels the "power of a clean conscience." His opponents wonder whether it is wise to bring to trial a man who has seen so much. The country wants rest, they say ; it is only Royalists and

Anarchists who would divide us. Barras smiles once more. The comedy is over. "We assured each other of our great esteem and closed the sitting."

Proceedings were taken against Babeuf and his accomplices at Vendôme. They behave like lions, says Barras; they say that they wanted to bring in the age of liberty for the country and for the whole of humanity, call their accusers the disgrace of the nation, and sing the "Marseillaise" at the close of each sitting. The Five who preside over the "one and indivisible Republic" look with mixed feelings on this theatrical business. Letourneur insists that the Court ought not to tolerate the insolence of the accused; Barras finds the judges biased, and thinks the practice of treating accused as criminals unworthy and irreconcilable with the rights of man as recognised by the State. Carnot has learned that one of the conspirators has come from Vendôme to Paris; the police know him to be a terrorist, know that a correspondence is maintained between the accused and their metropolitan society, and that a rising is planned for the 10th Floréal in the year V. Restless young men flock to Paris from all sides. The trial must be accelerated, and it is to be hoped that it will end in a number of severe sentences. In the month Prairial Babeuf and Darthé are condemned to death and seven of their companions to deportation, but fifty-three are acquitted. Carnot speaks of the verdict as a disgraceful document, and predicts that the acquitted Communists will enter into a new conspiracy. On May 28 Babeuf is guillotined. Filippo Buonarrotti,

who is banished from France, writes the history of the conspiracy. In the year 1797 Carnot is suspected of being a Royalist, and is, like the seven of Vendôme, condemned to deportation. He flies to Germany, and exposes, in a work written to justify himself, the disgraceful conduct of his colleagues on the Directorate. Nothing more is heard of the Communists. One act of the national comedy is over.

Babeuf lived courageously and died courageously. Behind the abnormal fanaticism of the tribune of the people there was a serious creed. The distant observer should not regard the Gracchus of St. Quentin in the same way as a Barras, sitting on the Director's seat, regarded him. All men, he thought, are free, and have equal rights, and the sole deity over them is reason. Any man who reflected seriously on this high-sounding and attractive gospel would soon perceive that it consisted of fine words, and only a short-sighted man could anticipate the state of things which they promised. Is a man free when poverty compels him to ask his neighbour for the means of earning his living? Is this neighbour really his brother when he can give or refuse the opportunity to work, and offer him a decent or a miserable wage? No. As long as there are inequalities of wealth the man who looks up to reason must not speak of liberty, equality, and fraternity; every law that prescribes equality of rights is a device for deceiving the people. If you take away from the wealthy what they have acquired or inherited there is no longer a right of private owner-

ship. All belongs to all, and society provides the opportunity and means of work without respect of persons ; then only do we return to the primitive equality and rid ourselves of our perverse morals. The secret society of the *Égaux* would convert phrases into legal forces, and, if it had not been betrayed by covetous spies, would have recruited a powerful army from the masses of the incompetent. For the incapable, or the man who is at least not above the average, can only desire a social order which prevents the rise of the more gifted ; he feels that the equality of rights embodied as a fundamental law does not protect him from the danger of falling before more powerful competitors, and he is not content until differences in character and achievement are no longer allowed to settle one's position. All men, he says, are equally gifted ; the fact that a Durand goes farther than a Dupont is the result of a state of law which favours the clever thief rather than the honest man. Arrange that every citizen shall receive his work and wage from society (that is to say, from the majority of the incompetents), and it will soon be seen that Durand does no more than Dupont. In his *Discours sur l'origine de l'inégalité parmi les hommes* Rousseau says that man was healthy, good, and happy in "a state of nature," and only became diseased, bad, and miserable after he began to acquire property. "You are lost if you do not remember that the fruit belongs to all and the soil to none."

The sacred books of the Jews and the Christians had said that all men are equal before God ; if you

put reason in the place of God, the equality remains, and if men are equal, the right to decide belongs to the majority. This must settle what is to be done and what not to be done, and appoint the guardians of the State. You say that it is ignorant of political science and has no idea how much experience and capacity are required to conduct the business of the State ; that under its rule things will proceed much as in a business-house conducted by chimney-sweepers. That is nonsense. All men are equal ; all evil comes of the practice of acquiring private property and therefore predominance. Ireland would to-day be a land of free and happy men if it had not made a gap in the hedge of its primitive communism by giving the chief the right to hold more cattle. An honest Jacobin knew the right way and excluded all doubt about it. When Lazare Carnot had nothing more to expect from the Girondists, he joined the Jacobins, in the Pavilion of Flora, as one of the twelve chiefs of the Committee of Public Safety, and earned their confidence, but remained always ready to co-operate with any strong independent party. Guizot says that he was "as honest as a talkative fanatic can be." Before the Revolution he was captain of a corps of engineers : after the 13th Vendémiaire he was a member of the Directorate. A man who advances so rapidly learns a good deal. Carnot was too clever not to see that the triumph of Babeuf would reduce France to impotence. He would come to an agreement with the people, who supplied him with money, arms, and men for war ; he, as a patriot and an ambitious man,

was bound to crush with an iron heel, as some parasitic growth, these heralds of the millennium of gentleness, in which there would be neither property nor war. Even Robespierre would not have spared or protected the Communists if he had conquered in the Thermidor struggle. In the tribune Babeuf he hated a man who promised the people more than they had got from the rulers during the Red Terror, and who was bound to cry out constantly on the open market: "This reason-worshipping, virtue-inflated Robespierre has cheated you out of your human rights."

When, a hundred and fifty years afterwards, the Social Democrats of France wished to honour the memory of Babeuf and scourge that of Carnot, who brought about this martyrdom, they could only obtain a hearing among the masses by avoiding references to the red mists of the Terror. The type of saviour of the people who reproaches the revolutionary of yesterday with inconsistency and base treachery is not yet extinct. Even Robespierre is still alive. (His name is Jules Guesde, and he is then glorified by German Marxists: or Jean Jaurès, and he is then glorified by the German middle-class. How long will that last? In France Guesde is the saint of a sect, and Jaurès a discarded fashion. Clémenceau's Celtic wit has spoiled the wreath of the orator of the Chambre. After the strike of the railwaymen, Grosclaude, the brightest exponent of Parisian opinion, asked: "Is it not time to put this old windmill in the lumber-room?" The friend of virtue will soon have to find a new incorporation.)

And Lazare Carnot must seem a mere bungler to those who have watched the progress of Aristide Briand. "If you would see how scoundrels murder the men who stake their lives for the freedom of the people, look at the traitor who now strangles wage-slaves." The pillory in which Briand was to be put naked was very early set up. It is true that the attempt to bring the rebel to trial for breach of the constitution failed, but the anger of the people may once more pass sentence of ostracism on Aristeides.

In his earlier years Briand was, like Danton, a lawyer, and it looked as if he would become a Babeuf. The wildest of his associates was not wild enough for him. Every means must be adopted, he said, to sap the citadel of reaction and release the people from the fetters of capitalism. It is only cowards who tremble at the cry of a general strike. The development of our economy requires this trial of strength; the man who wants to win must not shrink from it, and the man who would postpone it lessens the ultimate chance of success of the wage-earners. If the majority of the workers are still too tame, and allow themselves to be lulled to sleep by men who shudder at the thought of violence, they must be dragged on by a determined minority, as has happened so often in our history. Do you say that the goodwill of the comfortable exploiters will lead to improve your condition in spite of the clash of class-interests? Even the most insignificant reform will only be won by intimidation, if not by downright threats. You would not be isolated for

four-and-twenty hours ; the consciousness of solidarity will arm the whole proletariat more rapidly than is believed, and extend the field of combat from one frontier to the other. Every harbour-worker will help his struggling comrades by destroying a ton of foreign coal. The amorphous mass, the nervous flock, must be driven into action by men of courage. The greatest need at present is to organise those groups in which there is a determination to fight implacably. What have we to fear ? The rifles of our uniformed brothers ? They hate the Moloch of militarism as much as we do. They have heard the cry from a million throats : " When you are ordered to fire on insurgent workers it is your duty to aim at the heads and hearts of the officers who would compel you to commit the crime of fratricide." You may be sure that they will fight with you. But perhaps you prefer to remain under the yoke to the end of your lives and cheer the orgies of militarism ? No. We do not need any uniformed slaughtering. We make no distinction between just and unjust wars. Every war is to us an abomination, to be abolished by every available means. We are quite determined to answer a declaration of war with a general strike. The order to mobilise gives us the signal for revolution.

Thus speaks Aristide Briand, at hundreds of meetings, in the ear of the whole of France. A demagogue of a rare type. The ordinary demagogue speaks just as the parasites do who tell the king that he is endowed with higher wisdom than the rabble of his subjects ; he never tells the masses



Photo

M. BRIAND

Gerschel

what they do not want to hear ; he praises the unfailing instinct which they may confidently follow. Briand has a different system. He recommends himself by his virtuous readiness even to say what is not welcome. He sings the praise of minorities. Conclusion : "*Ni dieu ni maître.*" Battle-cry : "Fearless and unsparing propaganda by deeds."

It is hardly four years since France saw its Aristide in this light : the inexorable man who shrank from no consequence of his principles, who has sworn deadly hostility to the unjust State, who will destroy the capitalist Republic by the power of the masses, and cries to his comrades, who find their Jaurès too tame, almost toothless : "A man cannot be a revolutionary unless he advocates a general strike, as I do" ; a partisan of Hervé, who incites the troops to mutiny. He enters the Cabinet, and he declares from the tribune that he will not sacrifice one of his principles to the temptations of office. Winks and smiles on the benches below. Waldeck-Rousseau was the lawyer of the greatest exploiters, and seemed to be himself the worst enemy of the Socialists ; yet, quite coolly, he led the new Jacobins to victory. Combes wore the cowl before he became the breakfast-marmalade to the clerical steak. Millerand was a Social-Democrat, yet sat on the Ministerial bench beside Galliffet, the "murderer of the hostages," and adorned himself with titles and decorations. The man who sits on the fence seizes the axe that might destroy it. Why should it not succeed with Briand also ? It did succeed. It went very well. People whispered

presently : " A politician, a statesman who knows how to restrain himself at the proper time, and reflects in the heat of the combat that the good of the State may compel him to-morrow to make friends with the enemy of yesterday."

The persecution of the religious orders is connected with his name, yet the higher and lower clergy speak of him in a tone of sympathetic regard. He has a careful hand and can fasten threads on half-charred posts, and he smoothes out the creases caused by Clémenceau's unsteady policy. He becomes Premier : the Social Democrat, the leader of the anti-militarist group. Does Mme. Marianne begin to fear at last ? She is delighted : looks forward to a most amusing time. It is a heavenly spectacle for a jaded nation of pleasure-seekers. On parade-days Briand sits by the side of the President of the Republic, exchanges compliments with the leaders of the Army, regards their men as the indispensable support of the nation. And every soldier says to himself : " That man with the moustaches up there has told us a hundred times to turn our weapons on our officers in a street fight, and has solemnly sworn to prevent us from doing our duty in case of war by a revolutionary movement, a general strike, and a revolt of the masses. He is now our supreme chief." A spectacle for the gods—and for the Parisians, who hardly take their institutions seriously and do not credit any politician with convictions and principles. When the Premier speaks, he relies rather on plain logic and cool effrontery than on whirlwinds. In his

first programme-speech, at Périgueux, he utters a warning against fresh schisms ; says that the longing for internal peace is the heart's wish of the nation ; begs all good Republicans to forget their old grievances and unite in common work for their country. From that day onward he is the trusted man of all the quiet people of property who saw France already slipping into anarchy, all the upright friends of freedom who have long detested the smell of an impatient sectarian regiment. Is the power of the Jacobins really coming to an end ? Can a man who does not regard religion as a priestly delusion, and the inequality of men as the result of State-patronised robbery, breathe freely in France once more ? There are only the people about Guesde and Jaurès and Combes who frown. What will be the end of this man whom the confidence of the Socialist-Radical majority elevated to his position ? People recall Briand's work as an agitator and his fiery advocacy of rebellion : softly at first, then aloud, and at last in piercing tones.

He does not move an eyelash. His amiable, smiling mouth, overshadowed by his dark and menacing eyes, replies calmly : " I have not changed at all : I am just the same as when I fought the battle of the people on the Left ; but I am now Président du Conseil, the responsible head of the State, and so not subject to any party." Is this a reply and defence ? It is the careless gesture of a man who drives a fly away ; he did not fear the attack for a moment, but their murmurs disturbed him in his work. He repeats it in almost every

speech : " I am not changed ; but the country wants peace and needs the co-operation of all who have at heart the prosperity of the Republic, and so I remain in my place as long as a Republican majority supports me."

Then the railway strike begins. It is a deliberately revolutionary movement. The wage-demands of the workers have already been met or are about to be met ; the Government treats with the strikers and declares that it is ready to impress upon the railway companies any reasonable demand. Ambitious Syndicalism is not content with this ; it wants a trial of strength. The legal robbers, the bloated capitalists, shall feel all the terrors of a siege in their fortress. On all lines, east and west, the men are told to resort to the old method of *sabotage* ; material is not to be needlessly destroyed, but it must be made useless for the duration of the strike. A fine distinction. Why destroy a dynamo, when you can put it out of gear or hide some of its indispensable parts ? Why laboriously break up a locomotive, when you can starve its belly of coal or close the line by false signals ? For days together not a train leaves the chief station. Those who are willing to break the strike are intimidated by threats ; those who will not listen to words are driven home to starve by blows. If France is isolated from its neighbours, deprived of the means of export and import, and exposed to invasion on its eastern flank, you must recognise where the power lies and satisfy the masses who control life and death. This is not a rising for the improvement

of the conditions of labour ; it is a rising of a new character, to secure a fresh division of political power—a revolution.

Briand feels this, and does not allow his faint-hearted colleagues, who are anxious about their political future and their electoral mandates, to hesitate for a moment. Aristeides becomes Dracon: The leaders who are guilty of *sabotage* are arrested, the strike-breakers have armed protection, the strikers who are still liable for military service are called up and forced by their officers to do, as soldiers, the work which Syndicalism had forbidden them to do as civilians. The demagogues rage and howl. It was just such a strike that Briand had always advocated ; according to his ideas the men in every workshop ought to join the railwaymen, and we should thus have the general strike he longed to see, during which every Republican soldier was bound to mutiny. Briand's early speeches as an agitator were printed and put up on enormous posters at the street-corners. "Déclarations de M. le Président du Conseil." Threats and intimidation alone will ensure the success of the wage-earners. The order of mobilisation is the signal for revolution. The soldier must shoot officers who would force him to fire at the workers. The whole lyre. But the Premier is undisturbed, and lets them put up their posters. He is able to rest on the seventh day, like the Creator ; France is in order again, and all is well. When he is assailed in the Chambre with interpellations and with the abuse of the new Mountain, he—the Social-Democrat and revolu-

tionary—calmly replies : “ I will tell you, Gentlemen of the Extreme Left, something that may heat your indignation to boiling-point. If, when the country is threatened, the law did not afford any means of protecting the frontiers and so safeguarding the life of the nation, the Government would be compelled to adopt extra-legal means to secure its control of the railway, which is an important implement in the defence of the country. It would have done this ; the voice of duty would have compelled it to adopt this procedure.”

(Interlude. Hardly had the phrase about using extra-legal means for the protection of the country left his lips, when Comrade Colly roared out : “ Let me strangle the dictator.” Comrade Jaurès restrains him, with the assistance of others, saying : “ If you thrash him he is saved.” A masterpiece of Jacobinical pleasantry. The transport-worker, conductor or driver who makes railway material useless for a period of time which depends on his will must go free ; the law gives him the right of combination and strike, and not a letter of it restricts his choice of means. The delegate may throttle the minister whose speech irritates him ; it is only the suggestion of some possible use or harm, not the duty to act legally, that can restrain him. The head of the Government who has an idea that in an extreme emergency the interests of the country outweigh the question of legality is guilty of an abominable crime.)

The storm raged for an hour. Briand stands at the tribune in face of the threatening and howling

crowd. Traitor, dictator, blackleg, scoundrel—every insult is heaped on him. He is pale, but his eye is steady. His estranged and contemptuous colleagues spit at him his past and all that he has struggled for during many years. A man less sure of his nerves would anxiously ask himself whether this outburst of unpopularity was not likely to alienate from him the groups on which he depended for his majority. Briand remains quiet. He knows that he has a majority against those who would introduce anarchy into the country ; and, since he cannot get a hearing in the Chamber, he dictates the close of his speech to the reporters for the sake of the country. Then he goes home, quietly and without guard, and says humorously to the reporters who wait for him, as if he had fallen : “ If I am to play the dictator, I must learn to ride first ; I must look out for a nag to-morrow.”

The next sitting brings the indictment, couched in the venerable language of the French Courts. The seventy-five Social Democrats, amongst whom he had sat so long, accuse him of insolent tampering with the law and shamelessly selling his convictions, and declare that he has incurred the anger and contempt of the proletariat. Some time before Jaurès had called him a clown who aspired to play the part of Cæsar, and said that the vote of the majority would sweep him into the gutter. He is silent. He spoke only at the beginning of the sitting, and more melodramatically than usual : “ Look at my hands : there is not a drop of blood

on them. Your votes can end the life of the dictator. Take from him the tokens of your confidence, and he will pass impotently from the stage. The Government which you call reactionary puts its fate in your hands. I ask only one thing : let us die in the sunlight, not in a cellar." The phrase that had released the storm on the previous day was the indiscreet expression of an avoidable hypothesis. "An indiscretion." No one believes it. Every one could swear that Briand spoke yesterday as he wished to speak. But the modesty of the tactician wins votes for him : 94 against Briand, 388 for him. He has won. To the middle-class he is the saviour of the Republic. To all who have anything to lose he is the Messiah in a frock-coat, rescuing France from the peril of disorganisation and breaking the unnatural alliance with the Socialists. The hope, the hostage, the spotless standard of all good Frenchmen. He falls soon afterwards : in a cellar. But he returns some day. As the Minister of a King ? If not in person, certainly as a type.

Was it the common thirst for power that impelled this man to change his nature ? Because he has the terminology at his fingers' ends he thinks, like many others in every department, that he knows the business. Not until a later stage is the reality revealed to him. France, situated between armed States, needs an army ; only men who will obey blindly can serve the machine for the defence of the country. France, living amid States with ably conducted industries, must not sink into the miseries of

Communism, with its risk of rapid impoverishment and incurable malady. Yet nothing but a communistic social order, sparing the incompetent the painful struggle for life and giving them the same wealth, rank, and rights as the competent, will ever satisfy the demands of the majority. The man who offers less is pouring drops of water on white-hot stone. Did Rousseau never see that in the same forest a healthy tree sends its branches up toward the sky while the unsound tree hardly grows higher than a child? Not equality: it is inequality, grim pressure for the selection of the means of life and generation, that we behold whenever we glance at nature. Shall we attempt to be superior to it?

Every corner of this beautiful country is full of fever-sweat and heated breath. In every trade the arm reaches out for the power which belongs to the head. It is a question only whether the State will be crushed or slowly exhausted and made impotent in some hour of intoxication which shall affect even its guardians. The middle-class cheats the proletariat; the proletariat cheats the middle-class. We can, they say on both sides, go part of the way together. But the comfortable citizen is beginning to feel that his companion is taking from him, bit by bit, his right of property. The trade union, the *Confédération Générale du Travail*, becomes the Supreme Court in the State; the contempt for the country is on the increase. The proletariat? It will not believe for ever that monarchists and clericals will presently capture the Republic and set up a black tyranny. Small

mouthfuls do not satiate. And when the starving come across full dishes, it is useless to speak of moderation. What has been up to the present the outcome of the block-régime which was supposed to safeguard the rights of a menaced party in the Dreyfus trouble? A deep split in the trunk of the national life; the arbitrary power of the masses, drilled by astute hunters: the application of *sabotage* to politics—the materials and institutions of the State are not to be destroyed, but rendered useless during the conflict over the rights of property. If this state of things continues, France will become powerless; it will lose its colonies, its power on land and sea, its commerce, and the proceeds of luxury-production and foreign industry. It will be ripe for the social catastrophe which is sung daily to the tune of its national hymn. If you say France, you say division of minds. Catholic or Atheist, Liberal or Radical—the country asks the aid of all its sons who are bound by an interest in its preservation. The “drunken slaves” whom Gambetta would whip into their holes still live among us. Babeuf appears again. . . . An experience that begins in poverty and ends at the head of the Directorate may induce the honest to doubt whether all have the same rights.

For Babeuf, Carnot was the traitor: for Jaurès and his comrades it was Briand. In the mind of the courtier of the masses it is every man who thinks the maintenance of a State, however imperfect, and of its means of defence is more important

than the appearance of stubborn fidelity to principles, every man who is not sure that the emancipated and enthroned crowd will do that work which the welfare of the State requires, without a belief in rewarding and punishing gods, without some pressure, without the spur which the thirst for property and position applies to the flagging.

LUEGER

VIENNA in May. Last night the nightingale sang so enchantingly in the quiet, beautiful Schönbrunn Park, under the grey sky, that the listener might imagine that a choir of Dryad-souls was calling, with maiden longing, for their bridal joy; that, when the noise of the tired city suddenly broke upon their unaccustomed ears, these visitors from the fair world of myth started as if thrust into the deepest layer of a pit by the glittering, moonlit point of a lofty crystal tower. The morning wind, which has stripped the sun of its brown and grey and red veils, has swept away the evil vapours that rise in folds, on the eve of a festival, from the busy streets. The Ring glitters in the spring-light; roses and lilacs, violets and lilies, stir gently, as if their cups drank the warmth of the sun in chaste ardour. It is one scented garden from the Hotel Imperial to the Votive Church.

Is there some festival afoot? Banners wave before the entrance to the palace, and hot-house plants form a glorious mantle on a triumphal arch. Officers are seen in gala uniform; the Kärtnerring resounds with the tread of soldiers. The German Emperor is coming. William returns to the city for the first time since the trouble in Servia, and he shall see that he is welcomed as the friend who

was loyal in a dark hour. But this which draws one's attention is not some special finery displayed for the festival ; it is the everyday garb of Vienna in the month of May. Green level spaces lie between the shimmering white and the noble grey of the palaces ; there is a mass of flowers under every window of the Rathhaus ; there are baskets of flowers even on the slender iron standards from which the arc-lights flood the street. It is a city that needs no costly finery to adorn it, no perfume to be sprinkled on it. Set a wreath in its hair and two buds on the round vault of the breast, and it is beautiful enough for the visit of an Emperor ; like a woman in the glory of youth who dresses neatly for her housework. Hardly anywhere else will the eye of the northerner behold such a city. Nowhere else is there this crowd of spruce, light-hearted men, who always seem to have time to spare and a disposition to be pleased. Here wine is drunk, and the mountains are near ; and the burden of hurried toil does not kill the joy of life. Here the East begins. The air sings of it, and many a Levantine type meets the traveller. It is the outer court of the East : thoroughly cleansed, civilised, without smell or pestilence. It cannot be easy to keep in strict order this dreamy, playful, loved and loving crowd, this lazily elegant upper layer of humanity. Nor would Frau Vindobona love one who persuaded them to live in such order. . . .

The earliest court-carriages roll over the Karlsplatz. From the steps of the church, the noble rhythm of which was felt by Fischer of Erlach, we

look over the masses which gaily fill the square. There is no restriction, no domineering police to spoil the people's enjoyment of the festival. It is like a family feast; not one of the great feasts over which one is enthusiastic, but one of those quiet festivals that are always welcome. Here people and Government are not divided by sombre distrust, as by some mist-brooded trench. Nice uniforms: gold lace: handsomely caparisoned horses: green feathers, which shine in the sun like young leaves at midday. A murmur approaches, and grows louder, but never becomes a shout. No cheering; only a respectful greeting receives and accompanies the two Emperors. The wave dies away again. The names of favourite Archdukes and Archduchesses are repeated. Ministers, generals, and other dignitaries are briefly saluted. At last there is a brisker movement in the distance, and the murmur swells into a song, in which a choir of women take the lead with great fervour. Thousands of heads are bared and bowed. In a simple carriage is a man clothed severely in black: the plainest in the whole procession. His hair and beard are almost entirely grey: his head is bent, as if he were worn out. Yet he is greeted by the heart, not merely by the hats and lips of the crowd. Who is it? The man you ask gazes at you in astonishment, as if recalled from his devotions. Are there really people in Vienna who do not know that man? Or is it a stranger quizzing us? He again looks at you reflectively. It does not matter. He answers, proudly and quietly: "That is the Mayor."

The Mayor ? He has not usually an important part to play in Court spectacles ; he just makes his appearance. Perhaps, as in our country, he waits, chatting with his Councillors, for the gala-carriage, and recites his welcome-speech beside the head of a neighing horse. The crowd hardly notices him : the reporters scarcely mention him. But Dr. Karl Lueger is a commanding person wherever he appears ; even if his rank gives him an inferior place at the Imperial table, he might say with Bismarck : " Where I sit is always a distinguished place." If three Emperors came together to Vienna, each bringing his wife and a bestarred escort, the Mayor of the metropolitan and residence-city would, as head of the airy house into which the guests enter, always fix the gaze of all Vienna. Never before had there been such a master of this house. All bowed to his authority, and all learned to love him. Ancient chronicles tell of some such glory of mayors. In our time it is unknown, and is confined to Lueger at Vienna. This mayor was the leader of the most powerful parties in the Reichsrath, Landtag, and Gemeinderath : an incomparable orator : the wittiest speaker at every popular meeting or banquet : the most popular man in the kingdoms and countries of Francis Joseph : a ruler such as the peoples subject to the Habsburgs have rarely seen. That might suffice. Yet fortune crowned this dominant personality, standing apart from all others, with its fairest gift : with the glittering diadem of a kindliness that melted the hardest shells of hearts and gradually



Photo

DR. KARL LUEGER

C. Pietzner

reconciled even his opponents and deadly enemies. Mayor ? Rather call him governor and duke of Lower Austria. He was a great power : one whose nod would bring a great army into the field. Averse from pomp, he ruled and kept his throne for ten years like a prince ; and his townsmen buried him, in the light of a March noon, as their beloved father and master.

A fortunate man : one who had to live out his dream, and reached the full ripeness of his being under the smiles of fortune. When the forty-year-old lawyer first made a name, it was said : " A man who will go ahead, a man who has already worn every shade of belief and thinks every creed has its price : yesterday with Kronawetter, to-day with Schoenerer, to-morrow, perhaps, with Hohenwart, and the next day with those who sap the walls of the social structure with mines dug by the song of birds. A demagogue hungering for spoil. Somewhat dangerous. He is industrious, has a good appearance, can thunder and joke, flatter and be irreconcilably stiff ; he plays the ancient Viennese and amuses people."

So the eye of his opponents saw him. And since he raised his battle-cry against the children of Shem, he was classed amongst the dregs of humanity. That those he threatened should arm themselves was natural enough, but they made a mistake in treating their assailant as a scoundrel. Lueger had, as fiery youth so often does, embraced the superstition of the all-healing power of democracy ; he had dreamed, like hundreds of thousands under

pressure of the Slav-menace, of a greater Germany which should again include the lands subject to the Habsburgs; and in the course of time he had approached the Conservative creed. Only a fool could on that account reproach him with a base bartering of his convictions. He had, however, advocated the "equality of creeds" (people rarely spoke of race at that time), and had maintained friendly relations with Jews; and now he cried that Israel was the arch-enemy and must be disarmed and stripped of power. Was it because he thought that this would help him to rise? That seemed to be impossible: victory seemed certain for the alert mind of the capitalists. An ambitious man would have joined the Liberals, who were beginning to lack popular leaders.

Did Lueger ever hate the Jews? He found them too powerful, in spite of what they suffered in the years of speculation and crash, and their influence on all the forces of the Empire too great; he thought their activity especially hurtful when, in imitation of the Magyar, they sought to depreciate Austrian claims on them. What will be the end of it all if this kind of thing goes much farther? Hungarians, Bohemians, Galicians, Istrians, Magyars, Czechs, Poles, Roumanians, Ruthenians, Slovenians, Serbo-Croats, and Italians. The Imperial centre already almost subject to the dominance of a foreign and rapidly increasing race, to whom the maintenance of our ancient character is not a vital necessity. All authority set at nought since Königgrätz and especially since the crash. Cultivated sceptics who

sneer at Austria and think atheism a distinction and piety ridiculous. The various nations grow larger and stronger about us, and each marks itself off from its neighbours ; and shall the German-Austrian surrender, or only maintain the shadow of its dignity in endless struggles with the Czechs ? Thus may Lueger have reflected. Must every man be a scoundrel who does not purchase his convictions at a fashionable shop ? The "handsome Karl," the blonde tribune with bright eyes and manly bearing, was, it is true, always naïve ; he always believed in his heart what his lips said. Do not humble yourselves any longer, he cried, throw off your enervating timidity, and have the courage to be once more orthodox Catholics and confident Austrians. You ought not to be ashamed of such a change ; you ought to be proud of it. Whenever he found a word, he spoke it. And sparks of his fire fell on parched brains. This man has studied, yet has retained his piety ! He believes in Austria, and does not admit that we shall never do any good again ! He is not afraid of the Jews of Vienna, Prague, and Buda-Pesth, and he promises the oppressed, the small artisans and peasants, that they shall see better days, if they will unite and make a conjoint attack on the city of gold. He loves his country and his Emperor, yet he does not, like other patriots, conclude all his speeches with the Radetzky March. Dr. Karl Lueger becomes the favourite of the Lower Austrians. Bishops hail him as the redeemer from godless misery. Counts and grey-beards, archduchesses and sempstresses, respect

him. His party attains an irresistible power. Five times the Gemeinderath chooses him as mayor. After the fourth election Francis Joseph thinks that he will interfere, and he begs the too-popular man to remain in the office of vice-mayor for a time. The Emperor begs! Patience for a time; at present the rôle of patriot forces him to obey. In April 1897 Lueger is master of Vienna.

He had attained the office of mayor; secured it like a pretender to a throne which he feels that he was born to fill. Why was the leader of the Christian Socialists so fierce a critic of the Liberal administration of the city? Because he felt that he could conduct its affairs much better, and because such feeling of superiority always—think of Bismarck in the Schleinitz era—prompts one to judge severely. "There is a post in which I could do lasting good for my countrymen, yet feeble bunglers occupy it." He feels the pain every day; gradually he becomes anxious lest, as he grows older, he may not reach his aim. Who would remain gentle, with beating pulse, in such circumstances? Who would not take refuge in the feeling that the end justifies the means? Possibly Lueger never realised that he often fought with weapons which the laws of civilised warfare prohibit. He acted as he was, with all the blemishes and wrinkles of human nature, and did not notice that under pressure he often used unclean forces in the service of a clean ambition. Was he not in a desperate position? Did his enemies hesitate to use unclean weapons? The handsome Karl wore himself out. He was to be seen and heard

wherever the Viennese foregathered. He anticipated their will and shared their wishes. How did Ulrich Megerle become famous as Abraham of Santa Clara? By seasoning his preaching of penance with wit or bluff. What is it that won the hearts of the people for the Emperor Francis in spite of reverses in the field and at the diplomatic table, in spite of the repute of reactionary ideas? The fact that, with all his majesty, he was not ashamed to act and speak in a perfectly natural manner. Marengo, Austerlitz, Wagram, the Peace of Luneville, Pressburg, Vienna, the enforced surrender of the crown of the German Emperors, and his share in the abominations of the Holy Alliance—all was forgiven because he lived without pomp, liked pleasure, and talked to his subjects in the Vienna dialect.

Megerle's talents and Francis' system seemed to be combined in Lueger. Both of them knew the men they had to deal with in Lower Austria. They are men who cannot breathe if there are always clouds overhead, and the church-bell rings out the summons day after day to penance and purification; they are not satisfied with fleshless dogmas and dry abstractions. The court-preacher from the friars' convent would never have become the most popular man in Vienna on account of the fearless sincerity of his character together with the fervent love of men which lights up his severe countenance. He did this by wit and skill in speaking; by the originality of his fluent sermons, seasoned with pleasant jokes and comparisons drawn from gay and light-

hearted memories ; by his skill in touching the very focus of the will of his audience ; by his wise determination to illumine souls, not by the lurid fire of angry denunciation, but by the sparkling fire of wit. Read Abraham's account of the arch-traitor Judas and his observations on "Happiness without Malice" ; there is much to remind one of Lueger's art.

The Viennese does not want a rigid Cato or a stone Roland ; he wants heroes who are of much the same stuff and same character as himself, and whom he can imagine in familiar surroundings, over a bottle of Pilsener or Schwechater. When Dr. Lueger spoke in hot and smoky halls in the suburbs, he won the hearts of all before his fourth sentence. He was a scholar who did not shrink from the smoke and smell of the cheapest cigars, and who spoke the language of the people with obvious pride ; a man with the energy of hell, yet as gay as the most frivolous joker ; a man who did not spare the great, yet had a word of comfort for the simplest. These people do not like the inconvenience of a change of disposition. They want to remain just as they are, gay and pious ; they do not want to burden their brains with the latest intellectual fashion, which will end its life on the scaffold next spring ; they will only laugh at the man who calls them butterflies.

We are ourselves, and do not mind showing ourselves. Grey-bearded bugbears, and long-nosed Jews, and professors, and other bores tell us that we are no good ; that we just cling to what we

have inherited and so Austria makes no progress ; that we should listen to the journalist and not the priest. That will not do for us. If our hope has not yet been realised, it is the fault of those who have been sitting so long at the table and still secure the best titbits. Let them admit us and you will see a blue wonder—no, a black and yellow one. We do not need to change our colours to do something in the world again ; we will not have the change at any price. It is all very sparkling and crackling—rockets, bombs, fireworks. And a cloud of incense lies sweetly over the acrid tobacco-smoke.

Lueger taught the Austrians to believe again in Austria. That could only be done by one who believed in himself, yet did not regard himself as the only peak towering above the level. While literary men whined on all sides that it was all over with the rule of the Habsburgs, that Austria was bound to suffer in thralldom and lag behind in slavery to the clergy, and that, devoid of prompt and courageous men and with its masses unripe for strong organisation, it was sinking into the morass of gradual decay, this one man showed us how much energy and determination could be found even among the illiterate, and for the first time gave us an idea what an amount of talent for government and direction was to be found in German, monarchic Austria, with all its blind devotion to the Church. The man who had been decried as a low type of demagogue reveals himself in the Mayor's chair (Austria has not the stiff and unpleasant title "Lord Mayor") as an organiser

and ruler of great breadth of view and scrupulous resolution. He attends to the hygiene of the city, and provides it with a floral, perfumed sash which girds its frame with woods and meadows, and ensures for it light and air even in its distant future. He preserves and enlarges, wherever it is possible, every spot of green among the masonry. He has gardens and broad, bright squares laid down, and has flowers placed at the windows of the Stadthaus and on the iron standards of the electric lights. Observe it well, Vienna (to quote Abraham of Santa Clara), keep thyself young and pretty, and, in thy lust for monuments, do not forget the needs of thy children and grandchildren. You need a second water-supply for yourselves and them. Let the lighting of the city now be a municipal right and duty, and no longer fill the pockets of a foreign company. The Viennese must demand the best railways and tramways, and shall have them. For the small trader Lueger provides better credit; he modernises the insurance system; compels the community to insure their officials and workmen against the dangers of their employment, to provide for them the most hygienic conditions, to establish homes for children and marine sanatoria, and to bury their own dead, without paying tribute to the undertaker. Do artists complain that the lack of funds and the stinginess of the city leaves them to starve? It is a good opportunity to show our critics that we "clericals" and "blacks" have just as open a heart for the fine arts as the pious monks who saved ancient culture for humanity;

that we do more for art than these Liberals with all their fine talk. Lueger's language creates the Modern Gallery, and opens it to the most audacious talent. Does the multitude of its duties burden the city with too heavy an expense? Nonsense. A few millions are easily found. Courage! Vienna is Vienna, and will find a way.

The expenditure of the city rose to two hundred million marks in one year, and even more. The Mayor cut down his own salary; not a penny more than twenty thousand marks would he have. A man who never thought of filling his own purse, people said. Yet he worked like the most industrious son of Shem; as agitator and man of business, as ruler and representative. He did everything. In the early morning he makes a speech on the possibility of cheaper transport of meat. He gives audience to advisers and petitioners, the heads of Citizens' Clubs and the leading men of the party. He speaks in the Reichsrath or the Landtag. He receives two or three dozen visitors and distributes the current work. He presides over the Gemeinderath, and has an effective answer for every question. Immediately afterwards he sees the Premier and confers with the leaders of other parties as to the best way to facilitate the work of Parliament. In the evening he attends a civic festival or a sitting of the Electoral Committee. From there he goes, perhaps, to attend a meeting in the suburbs. After midnight, he meets his intimate friends in a private discussion, if it is necessary.

He is always fresh and bright and ready to joke.

He is never tired when his civic dignity requires him to represent it or some other duty calls. Never a wearisome pedant. Though a Privy Councillor and "Excellency," who might have any portfolio he pleased, he is always as simple and modest as he used to be in the smoke of suburban halls. The man who forced the butterflies of the Danube into order was bound to be of that character. Light complexion, no weakness of nerves or thin spots on his skin, shrewd, energetic, industrious, good-humoured at all times, his manliness blessed with every grace : a Viennese from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet. He had strong allies ; the royal house, the priesthood, the higher nobility, and the women. (Did he feel that in a Catholic country it is celibacy alone that gives a man the stimulating charm of inaccessibility and recommends him to the trust of women as one adorned with the aureole of proud chastity, and was it on that account that he never married ?) In the main, however, he had to thank himself only : his chief power was due to the magic of his personality which even his enemies did not escape. Antisemite as he was, he was admired by the Jews (who appreciate ready wit even in German clothing, and once heard the leader of the Christian Socialists blandly remark to them after an outbreak of disdainful anger : " It is really not meant so badly "), and was applauded by the Jewish journalists of all languages when he once invited the International Congress of Journalists to a banquet in the Town Hall. His geniality, warmth of nature, and candid benevolence won

strangers who approached him in distrust. He soon spoke of Vienna, and all felt that the agitator and party-man was a good man ; behind the spines of the hedgehog they perceived the strong heart of a German Christian. He was decidedly a German ; it never entered his mind to receive insults and blows on the cheek with patient submission. He was a Viennese who loved his home as the tenderest of sons loves his mother. He did not need a family ; he had Vienna. That he would defend with every available weapon. For that he would, as Kleist's Hermann did for his Cheruskerland, readily sacrifice the appearance of fidelity and honesty. Whatever served the city could not be a sin.

With kindling eye Lueger watched the growing beauty of the fair city entrusted to him, which was to him mother, spouse, and children. A fortunate man ; one who was bound to live out his finest dream, and bore down all attempts at resistance with his warm sentiments and strong will. He died before he could lose the favour of the people. He suffered, and knew that his evil was incurable, for three years. But heaven turns even suffering into happiness for its favourites. Illness ennobles Lueger's rapidly ageing form ; the continuous suffering mellows his sometimes coarse wit into a fatherly humour. His jokes come more mildly from his lips, and in the silver ripeness of his early-autumn martyrdom he seems distinguished ; the man who, though made of earthly material, could become what he was. Vienna sees the sick Mayor work, create, smile, even laugh ; it knows

what it is about to lose in this vital force that spreads even under the sickle of the mower of men ; and in its respect, sympathy, and concern the community redoubles its gratitude. He kept his power to the last hour of his life ; though long since almost blind, he retained the love of his fellows. Hope sends flowers from palaces and cottages, and the last levy of the enemy disarms before this camp of suffering. Every one knows what the city, what Austria, is losing. " Is he still alive ? " It is the first question in the morning for weeks. Credulous affection thinks of miracles. And when at length the black streamer waves from the Town Hall, the city of pleasure holds its breath ; the tender green seems to be withered, and the gay spring flowers to lose their colour. There is mourning in the land, without need of orders. Hundreds of thousands line the funeral route ; wreaths are heaped up in mountains. The aged Emperor kneels in St. Stephen's Church beside the earthly remains of his best servant. The House of Austria thanks him. From every tower the dirge is wafted : " We have lost Lueger." Never before had a citizen such a funeral.

One man was absent on the day of the funeral ; the heir to the throne was kept away by the illness of his children. Francis Ferdinand would gladly have shown himself to the Viennese on that day. They were somewhat annoyed with him for making the foreigner Nagl the successor of Cardinal Gruscha, instead of their beloved Bishop Marschall ; although they heard that the angry prince had sharply

scolded Count Galen who, little understanding the feeling of Vienna, had given this bad advice to his god-child. From the court the murmurs descended into the valley. "Will he not be steadier when he is Emperor? If so, the favourites may tremble. Beck, Aehrenthal, Galen—in the sun to-day, in the gloom to-morrow." Had he been able to mourn beside Lueger, the friend of Marschall, he would soon have conciliated the grumblers. So powerful is this Mayor, even on his bier, that an Archduke and heir to the throne must appear before the people as a friend of the dead man.

Can a man who has been almost deified by an overpowering love have a successor? Lueger could leave the title, but not the power, to his heir. Karl the Fortunate died so slowly that he had time to put the house of the city in order. With his purblind eyes he still discovered much talent and many a man seeking to conform to the great model. But not a head that might bear all the crowns endangered by the storm. And it was just a time when the party and the city needed a man whom the masses would freely trust. Must the mayoralty again become a humdrum office, for which any aged and dignified personage was good enough? If so, there would be a material change in Austria, not in Vienna alone. "So it happens when men lose themselves in the cult of persons and allow some favourite of the people to become too great. When this revered 'personality' sinks into the grave some fine day, the worshippers of yesterday

fall upon each other, and the peaceful citizen, who wants a good dinner after his work is over, does not know who is cook and who is waiter." Berlin is not exposed to that danger. It gets its mayors from abroad, and is satisfied if they discharge their duties promptly and punctiliously. "A good thing I have succeeded in the metropolis"; otherwise he would have offered himself for Breslau or Altona, and would have become stale in the end. There is no sparing at the Red House, but magistrates and civic officials do not take kindly to new ideas. Praise civic freedom and the blessing of self-government, and then you are safe. The city grows uglier, the woods are cut up into plots, and nothing is done for art. However the streets are clean, the value of ground increases, and the foreign gentleman whom we call our Oberbürgermeister does his duty with the utmost correctness. He did not grow in this soil; why should he wed his heart to it? Berlin, with all its charm, will not gain the love of the Empire until some loving son takes on himself, with strong creative will, the fate of the city whose life he has grown to regard as his own. Lueger did that for Vienna. Even if the mood of the city turns away from his party, in which, when the legend is forgotten, men will have felt the too-human element, the figure of Mayor and Dr. Lueger will never cease to be crowned by Vienna with the fresh green of gratitude and affection.

TOLSTOI AND ROCKEFELLER

FROM all parts people had begged the old man to write them something for his eightieth birthday. It was enough if a few words from his pen appeared in their journals on this world-wide celebration : something to show that they were connected, and that their nod would unseal the lips of the great man. Lew Nikolajevitsch sits and reflects. To one, possibly to two, he might have something new to say ; the herd must be content to hear once more the old message that has not yet taken root in their brain and heart. So he sits and broods over the principles of his life : principles that tell how, in his work, he has sought to interpret the meaning of life and the purpose of mankind. " For five-and-thirty years I was a Nihilist. Not a Socialist and Revolutionary, in the perverse sense that usage has given to the word Nihilist. No : one in whom there is nothing, not one spark of faith. I lost my faith in an early year, and then lived, as most do, in the vanities of our world. I wrote books, and would, as others do, teach what I knew not. But the Sphinx followed me with implacable wrath and cried to me : ' Solve my riddle or I devour thee.' The science that men prized taught me nothing. To the ever-recurring question of the purpose of life, the one question of moment to me, science made answer

with knowledge of quite other things, which concern me not. The man who follows this 'scientific' teaching must join the age-long chorus of the wise—Solomon, Socrates, Sakya-Muni, Schopenhauer—and, like these great forerunners, deem life a senseless evil. I wished to slay myself. At length there broke on me the thought that I would see how the great mass of men live : those who do not, like us of the 'higher classes,' lose themselves in fruitless torturing of the brain, but work and suffer, yet are at peace and are sure of the purpose of their lives. I learned that one must live as these live, return to the simplicity of their faith. But my mind shrank from the polluted teaching which the Church gives to the poor in spirit. I therefore concluded that I would carefully examine this teaching, and try to find what was true and what was woven of superstition. The Church offers us food that nourishes not : food on which even the new-born babe cannot thrive. Instead of the spirit of the Gospels it gives us ceremonies : empty forms instead of faith. Its catechism says that we may judge, even slay, if it be done in the service of the State : says that we may take the goods of others, and resist evil. The Church has fallen since the days of Constantine ; it no longer listens to the voice of God, but to the cry of the age. In our time it is turned pagan. Who counselled or allowed you to struggle for life ? To give your lives for others was the command of Jesus. Resist not evil. Judge not. Slay not. That is written ; yet you have courts of judgment, armies, and prisons, and, singly and as a body, you make

daily use of force. Because you must ? As long as earthly power is so far from divine truth your commands and forbiddings are of no avail. And how do you think and act ? Once, at Moscow, I went through the Borowitzky Gate. Under the arch sat a misshapen old beggar with his head in rags. I felt for my purse, to give him a copper, and saw a grenadier run towards us from the Kremlin : a strong young man, who looked well in his uniform. And when the beggar saw the soldier, he was filled with terror and limped away as quickly as he could, to the Alexander Garden at the foot of the hill. He had forgotten that it is forbidden to sit under the gate. The soldier ran after him, loudly abusing him, and when he had come close to me, I asked him if he could read. 'Certainly ; why ?' 'Hast thou read the Gospel ?' 'Yes.' 'The passage which bids us give food to the hungry ?' I repeated the words to him. He knew them, but he listened attentively, and I felt that he was uneasy. Two men stood by us, listening. The grenadier was uncomfortable ; he had acted as the law bade him, yet had acted wrongly. The contradiction tormented him. He was uncertain how to answer. Suddenly his sharp eye lit up ; he looked at me cunningly and asked : 'Hast thou read the rules of military service ?' I had to confess that I did not know them. 'Hold your tongue, then,' he said ; and he lifted his head with the air of a conqueror and prudently moved away. So in our time do men flounder in error. All that I feel and see convinces me that I have found the real meaning of the

Christian teaching. For a long time I could scarcely reconcile myself to the strange thought that, after nineteen hundred years, in which millions have known the words of the Saviour and thousands have devoted their lives to the study of the faith, I should find something new in the moral law of Christ. But it is so, however strange it may seem to me."

To read that again will help them. One word more. "All evil comes of stupidity and perversity of mind. As long as I know not what I am, and wherefore I am here, life is unbearable. In the infinite expanse of matter, time, and space there is born an organic cell, which lives for a minute, then dies again. I am that cell. Is that, then, the final, the only issue of the hundreds of years of thought upon the matter? No. Not for himself shall man live, but for God; or he lives like the dog. Karatajev's dog is happy when it smells the lumps of meat about it: flesh of all sorts of animals, even man, in every stage of decomposition. The soldiers held off the wolves, and so the dog could gorge itself in peace. Is our happiness, the purpose of our life, not something different? When I recall the frame of mind in which I passed my youth, I understand the worst crimes: even those which are done without aim, without a desire to injure, from mere curiosity or the unconscious impulse to act. There are times when the future rises before us in such drab colours that the eye shuns it, and the mind seeks to convince itself that it has neither future nor past. At such times, when thought no longer controls each

stirring of the will and only the instincts of the body rule, I can understand why the inexperienced child, without a shudder, fearlessly, with a smile of curiosity on its lips, sets fire to his home : the home in which parents and brothers are sleeping and that shelters all he holds dear. I would teach the children of the people to think and write. Must not I learn in their school to think and write ? The development of man does not bring him so close to the ideal of harmony, which he bears as a standard within him, that he feels it merging into a reality ; it rather hinders the realisation of the ideal. A healthy babe embodies the ideal of truth, beauty, and goodness ; such a child is close to the creatures without thought, the beast, the plant, the whole realm of nature, and each day of its life removes it farther from them. We seek our ideal in front of us ; and we know not, poor blind fools that we are, that it is far behind us."

Men must hear that once more, hear it repeatedly ; nothing else. No more towns, no more vast agglomerations of men, no more factories. Remain on the land ; there each may find the necessities of life by the work of his hands. The necessities—not what seems necessary to a sick fancy : for his own needs—not those of others. Woe to the man who lets others work for him ! Every man shall attend to himself ; he shall look into his inmost soul, and seek the light of the divine message. With his neighbour he must suffer only, or give him what he can spare ; give without pluming himself, or calling for a reward. When my heart was glad

because some one had seen me give three roubles to a beggar, I was far from salvation. Almsgiving avails not : what we want is the division of our possessions. Idleness and luxury, wage-slavery and debt-bondage, are the beginning of all crime. Resist not evil : judge not : slay not : guard the tongue from the sharp thorn. We are tiny particles of the world-soul, and have but to care for our cleanness. What need have we of government, arms, armies, courts, verdicts, prisons, wars ? These things God never willed ; nor that we should take the lies of a strutting science for truth, and trust that abasement of reason which has brought on earth so much doubt and pride and disease, and rendered no service ; but that we be Christians, walking with each other in the light as brothers, and giving neither near nor far, not even the wicked, any cause for anger or assailing by our act or indulgence.

“ With such a view of the purpose of life have you become the hero of two hemispheres, their revered, almost worshipped, idol, and so remained, for decades, down to this day ? Strange.”

Lew Nikolajevitsch raises his strong mujik-head, with the large dull-glancing eyes of an old man embedded under the massive arches of his forehead. Has he again been thinking aloud ? Has some one come softly into the room ? There he stands : old but sinewy, severe, masterful. Unasked, he draws a straw-bottomed chair to him. Ask how he entered ? It befits not a wise man to concern himself with so small a thing. It seems as if he would question the saying. “ Strange ? That men do

not hate one who seeks only to teach them love ? That there are yet Christians whom the folly of modern life has not blinded to the real purpose of existence, and whose soul still rejoices when a brother of men, thinking to serve his brothers in all lowliness, points out to them in what direction they may yet find peace and happiness ? ”

“ Strange : so it seems to me. For until this day men have not welcomed these guides, admonishers, prophets, and preachers of repentance. Many have been stoned, or nailed to the cross, or set on the scaffold instead of the throne. Yet the world has been Christian for full two thousand years. One wonders whether men are nobler now than they were in the days of Savonarola, or whether they no longer see a menace in those who call them to repentance, no longer take so seriously the summons to higher righteousness ; perhaps glance idly at it as the latest novelty, and pass on their reprehended ways.”

“ There are two kinds of men, as there ever were. There are those who live like animals and curb not the desires of the flesh, and those who would walk in the light. I see no larger growth of nobleness and goodness : rather an increase of God-hating animalism. But you speak as if I had received only gratitude and love, and as if all the powers of earth had not united to malign the light-bringer and bind his hands.”

“ Is it so bad ? Alexander VI said of Savonarola : ‘ This man would have to die, even if in his person another John, a second Baptist, were slain.’ But Alexander III, when he was asked to sacrifice you

to the vengeance of the Holy Synod, made a reply which is almost western in its shrewdness : ' This man is an apostle ; I will not make a martyr of him.' And your followers, who give not to their country the children, military service, and taxes it demands, are not more innocent than the crowds of Piangioni, the tearful folk, who fell under the Dominicans of Bologna. The house of the Holstein-Gottorp has not done so ill as once did the House of the Medici. Yet it does not owe this to you. Savonarola would put the power in the hands of pious burghers who would tear out each thing of beauty, each thing that pleased the senses, as a poisonous weed. Yet he would have government, and therefore order and subordination. And you ? You assail all that is indispensable to the State : government, Church, army, justice, taxation, increase of population. The State itself you deem the greatest of all evils. You would have no authority of any sort : no coercion, no dependence, no breeding, no means of defence. You turn upon the Emperor and his servants, the Church and its priests, the lords of the land and industry, all who have power or wealth, with the hardest words ; you would dissolve the civic community, forbid property, take from the land its power to strike, and enfeeble its chief implement, the number of its citizens.. Yet not a hair of your head is touched. It is true that you have been excommunicated, like the Florentine reformer ; but has it hurt you ? Had you not long before seceded from the community which now excludes you ? Has the fiery ban done anything but light up your unassailable greatness ?

Unassailable you are, because you are consecrated by the fame of the poet, the genius of creative intellect. Only in this land of marvellous contradictions could you, with impunity, have uttered your last and sternest word. You could not have done it in the freest of republics. Eighty years old, yet not a day of them spent behind the bars of a jail ! When the foe pressed your country, bleeding from a hundred wounds, and it needed comfort, as a labourer needs nourishing bread, you spat your wrath in its face ; you would take the weapons from the hands of your mother. And this mother loves you, and looks on you with pride as the best of her sons. See what a festival the land is making for your eightieth birthday. It seems to me that so easy a course of life will not read well in a martyrology."

Their glances crossed. There was a sound as when ice-cold water falls on glowing steel. Did you ever see, in some house of the aged, a spark fly from the snow-white skull and, hissing, die again ?

"Jesus Christ be with you in all your ways ! He who tells others the truth must be prepared to hear it himself. Do I owe this visit to your desire to imprint this truth on my mind ? "

"Desire to educate ? Subject and object have been somewhat too long in circulation for that. No : it was really curiosity that brought me here. Do not take it amiss. I took the road in order that I might see with my own eyes how things seemed in and about Baku ; in Cernij Gorod, I mean, and the neighbouring region of eternal fire. There is not

much new. The tank-ships and cistern-waggon are not changed, and as to the figures none could mislead me. But the land! Do people hold Caucasia to be Russian territory? It is hardly so now. The tax-gatherer seeks in vain to gather toll, and the stranger learns the nature of anarchy. I wonder whether your Tsar knows that he has almost lost this land, and whether the Nobels and Rothschilds, for whom the naphtha-springs flow, can sleep in peace. All kinds of idle thoughts occurred to me in Apscheron. Here, on the background of the thirty-yard-long trench, burns the great eternal fire, which neither smokes nor smells, to which the Parsees would have built a temple. Pious men: after their kind, of course. Whether corpses are left to the worms on the dakhmas of Persia or in the earth, whether holy water or the urine of cattle is used to purify, as the priests may bid, is only a question of fashion. They are men who, in spite of the Avesta, have eagerly accommodated themselves to the times, and, while other Orientals dream on, they build railways and ships, practise commerce and banking. We have had to do with men of that sort. But they have not dealt rightly with the carbon dioxide which feeds the fire on the Apscheron peninsula. A temple and a cloister are things of value. But they bring nothing in, and help not to enrich the soil of the country; and no man can live by worship. Now the cloister is in decay, and there is the rattle and roar of factories where the church once soared; and the underground flow of gas is used to heat the retorts. Pactolus did not as easily bring blessing

to the Lydians as the breath of the earth has brought it to the Caucasians, since the spirit of enterprise was wedded to science and began to use the proper technic for the new aim. Enterprise, science, technics: you shudder at the very sound of the words it seems to me. Good. The land has no master: breeding and obedience are hardly to be found. If that go on, the walls of the factory will fall and on its foundations a church will be built again; whether Christian or Parsee does not make much difference. I wished to see, at quite close range, the man who advocates this reaction (rebarbarisation his opponents say). That, Mr. Tolstoi, is why I am here."

"As an enemy. As one who believes in the sanity of 'modern development,' and does not understand why the men of the Caucasus would loose the bond that holds them to the overpowering State, and to whom it would seem a crime if they abandoned the factory and returned to the futurity of a natural condition. A crime, that is their one salvation. Enemies rarely come here. Yet you, my brother, are welcome."

"Thank you, but I am not an enemy. Anna Karenina, Peter Bezuchow, and Andrew Bolkonskij count me amongst their most devoted admirers. I first learned to love the Caucasus from the poet of the Cossack-stories; and I understand how the grief of a material loss converted the play of strings into a Kreutzer Sonata. Who could resist the magical power of the poet—the man who from such poor chaotic stuff as words

creates enduring worlds ? I am not even an enemy of the philosopher or the Messiah. What he says is—pardon me—not new enough to make an old man's blood boil ; it has been said so often by Lollards, Anabaptists, and pious communists, down to Rousseau and his heirs, that the ear of mankind is accustomed to it. The pure state of nature : that was ever the phrase. Nature as the most reliable friend of man, the one friend designed for him by God. But is it so ? Is it not, in its greatness and majesty, also an enemy, whose stubborn effort to drag him back to animalism must be resisted by the erect quadruped with all his might ? Of all that for some centuries has seemed to him indispensable it affords him almost nothing. To the animal it provides everything : trees and bushes, caves and clefts, clothing and weapons, food and drink. Man has with great pains to create what he needs : tools, weapons, dwelling, clothing, food. He cannot live under the canopy of leaves which spreads in the springtime ; he cannot use the leaf, the stem, the grain, the herb, the flesh, as they are provided. What wealth of fancy, labour, and talent must he not employ to make the earth habitable ? Is it strange that he is so prone to doubt whether a God, whom he must deem wise and benevolent, created this earth for him ? Yet the divine wisdom is seen in the very need to struggle for the principle of life ; the need for all that crawls or flies, swims or runs. The strong devours the weaker, sucks its strength, and so is made the fitter to conquer in the next struggle. The divine goodness is seen in the care

to prevent the child of the sixth day of creation from relaxing. He who made the pike and the shark, the fox and the wolf, the hyæna and the tiger, and filled his world with ravagers of every kind, was not a God of gentleness and softness, with tears dropping on his beard when the lamb bleeds under tooth or knife. To man, who was made in his image, he gave the lordship over the fishes of the sea, the birds of the heavens, the cattle and the worms, the whole earth. So says the book of Genesis: speaks expressly of this right to lordship, which can only be exercised by force, and lets us see that a wise benevolence compels man to struggle for all he needs, because, could he pluck it without effort, he would not employ his powers and would see his faculties diminish instead of growing. Even in the welter of mythology the law of the struggle for existence has, as you see, taken root. We need not be more divine than God. The "pure state of nature" was not set up for ever by him. There was to be neither equality (as the tree and the herb testify) nor uncompulsive, masterless brotherhood. He cannot will that nature, to which his breath gave a master, should conquer, and man should learn to crawl again, should dwell again in the cavern, a biforked animal, with his stew and his horse-flesh; that art and science and civilisation should perish, and the earth be again a desert. He cannot will it, for otherwise he would condemn his own work to destruction. How would the world look then? The plaint of Savonarola were a luxurious joy in comparison. And in this pitiful world of moans you would place, not a herd of

miserable beasts, but divine men, whose head should reach the heavens."

"We differ in our first principles, and therefore will hardly agree on the simplest point. For your praise of the artist I have no thanks. Not merely because the same lips have given a like praise to Shakespeare, to Maupassant, and other harmful men, but because I know that you regard the gift of presentation, the art of drawing and shaping, something of no consequence; instead of that which alone is of consequence; the moral relation to the subject and the sure discrimination between good and evil. It does not matter. It is thirty years since I outgrew the vanity of artistic pride; and long before that the words of praise had given me secret pain, because I painted life so masterfully, yet knew not what to think of it. An artist who depicts a procession, and does not show whether he loves or despises such a ceremony! The one question is how a man conceives the meaning of life and the purpose of humanity. But the real meaning of life and the true purpose of all man's endeavour were taught us, for all time, nineteen hundred years ago by Christ, and we have but to remove the rubbish from the tablets on which his doctrine was inscribed. That I have tried to do this displeases you. That, with all your proud reason, you do not understand the aim and purpose of my endeavour is made plain by every word that falls from your lips. Yes; I should like to have a world without truffles, *paté de foie gras*, motor-cars, electro-chemistry, horse-races, churches, wars, and either legitimised or illicit whoredom. I

would not have the State an institute of compulsion : I would have no hierarchy or money-slavery. I want what Jesus Christ wanted. Do you fancy you can convert the man of eighty ? ”

“ Only a fool could cherish such an illusion. I did not imagine that I should, for a single second, disturb the serene self-consciousness of the prophet. How could that be, and yet he remain what he is bound to be ? I came to see : to see a saint in the flesh, him whom men praise so highly and who is irradiated with the brightest glow of love. I came as one whom men mightily condemn, one thrust into deepest darkness by hate and jealous wrath.”

“ Who are you that you should thus draw upon yourself the anger of our brothers ? One who dragged the manly youth of his people to the scaffold ? If I mistake not the speech, a son of British soil. . . . ”

“ American. I am John Davison Rockefeller, of Richford in the State of New York. I was seventy on the eighth of July, and am therefore no longer a pleasure-seeking youth. I should not be even if my powers were unimpaired : unfortunately. At the age when you were enjoying the richest pleasures of student-life at Kasan, I had to bend all my faculties to the keen rivalry for money. At nineteen you, the scion of an ancient and noble race, with large possessions, had concluded your oriental studies and jurisprudence, and lived without anxiety on your estate ; I was then head of a business I had established. The years you spent so gaily in the uniform of an artillery officer I passed behind a ledger.

And when you were sated with the licence of St. Petersburg society and artists, I created a position for myself for the second time. And so on. It would be hard to find two lives whose curves diverged more."

"It would. Lord of industry and peasant, master of power and child of God ; one whose whole life rests on violence and exploitation and a Christian ; the richest man on this once Christian earth and the poorest."

"The poorest ? Oh, yes ; the good things one can see and taste here belong to your wife. You eat differently, drink differently, and make your own clothes (not an uncommon thing down our way). Formerly, you were a shoemaker and ploughman : a very healthy exercise, and quite tolerable when you can abandon it the moment it is inconvenient or no longer suited to your powers. I should call a poor man the man who has never known luxury, and would like to taste it, yet must die without it ; not the sated man who has only to stretch out his hand to feed the new-born hunger of his appetites. However, we will not quarrel about that. Am I the richest ? The Press has said so often enough. 'At least twenty million dollars a year.' The rogue puts these in his pocket, the reader thinks, and buys palaces and jewels and delicacies and women. I may observe in passing that that would not be a crime against humanity ; a clever political economist could tell you much about the social uses of great extravagance. In fact, however, I live much as you do : like every old



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TOLSTOI AND ROCKEFELLER

man who does not care to accelerate his end by intemperance and folly. Not entirely as you do : our work differs in its nature and intensity. You write and read, and need vigorous movement, after sitting so long, to increase your circulation : splitting wood, running, ploughing. My work is not so sedentary, and demands more time ; I should be an ass if I did not make use of anything that can be bought to assist my labours. Since I can in ten minutes, perhaps, create values which would never have been produced if just those ten minutes had not been employed, I must pay the highest price for every particle of an hour. Pullman cars, motor-cars, and private wires are dirt-cheap if they save me time. My money ? That also works ; never rests, like myself. It courses through a thousand channels, and after the harvest it is both crop and manure. A man who can hear the grass grow might be able to say what my real gain is. But the tyranny and the exploitation ! Is it not natural for mankind to hate one who deals so ruthlessly with its sons ? I see you assent. I began in my twenty-sixth year with petroleum, which had then only been in use for five years as an illuminant of the first quality, and has done much for others besides me. The Standard Oil Works in Cleveland became the Standard Oil Company, then the Trust, on which so much abuse is poured. As the outflow is poorer between Ontario and Kanowha, and the pumping less profitable, I proceeded to Kansas and Kentucky, Florida and Colorado, as far as the Pacific Ocean and the Southern States. Love and benevolence had

nothing to do with the business. My market was three-parts of the earth. Your country, with the immense resources of Apscherons Tscheleken, is my most dangerous rival. I had to concentrate my strength, and endeavoured to raise the percentage of the available mineral oil by improved methods of refining, and, by improvements in transport and control of the net-work of pipes that convert the raw oil into refined and convey it to the coast, seek something like a monopoly, at least in our continent, and then endeavour as shrewdly as possible to extend my dominion. What does it matter if an import-house is ruined by underbidding, or the people of the Pipe Line groan. The Lord God Himself could not make room for the great without narrowing the range of the small. How did we do it? When a knot is planed smooth, there are splinters. The man who does nothing, and folds his arms, can keep his coat spotless. He has no need for apology, no need to ask for indulgent consideration. No doubt, we are sinners, if you compare us to the pure and holy. How the market would be if the wicked John had not secured unity and organisation, people do not seem to reflect. Every demagogue, whether he be Roosevelt or Bryan, abuses him, and besmirches his honour. That I thrust the weak out of my path, so that they should not run between my legs and hurt themselves, is a crime. That I demand the highest available price, and only give what I am compelled to give . . ."

"Crimes, and sins against the Holy Ghost. So

I also deem them. And in one who lives thus, and brings others under the yoke of such a life, I see the veritable servant of Satan ; even though he goes to church at the hours prescribed by the clergy, and swallows dogmas, like the mixtures of his physician, in which the sense of primitive Christianity has become nonsense. What ? To herd men together, to compel them to work in stinking pits and pestiferous factories, which gladden not the soul, and of which the profit goes to the ' master,' that is to say, to one who exerts power over his brothers, and maintains his money-making by using all the compulsory resources of a politically organised robbery ? And the man who does this comes to me and would . . ."

" See a man who is venerated as a saint. Why ? Because, abandoning the one fruitful achievement of his life, he repeats, with the conscious pride of a discoverer, what has been said a hundred times already, and professes a faith the impracticability of which has been fully proved. Professes it with his lips ; he does not exhibit its influence in his life. There is room here for a primitive Christian community. Is the land divided among the peasants, as we should expect of one who came late into the school of our good Henry George and never outgrew it ? No. It belongs to Mme. the Countess. She has means, servants, comfort : all that the Count condemns as un-Christian and unworthy of a man. She will bequeath her property, movable and immovable, in order that her children and children's children may be spared the struggle for life. And what will the legacy of the holy man be to the broad-browed

men of God who regard his wondrous deeds almost as deeds of the Saviour? Whether pitch-black John Davison has spent twelve or sixteen million dollars on his country, we will not seek to determine with pedantic accuracy; Chicago University alone has had more than six million. Any one who cares to inquire will hear of many a useful foundation. That is not the chief point. What has the rogue paid into the coffers of the State in forty-three years, since he began to deal in petroleum in Cleveland? By how much has he enriched the lands which he has since got within his claws (as you put it)? This should be shown in figures; and then you should inquire how the men he has enslaved lived before, in the delights of rural freedom, and how they live to-day in those horrid cities. The comparison would show . . ."

"How freemen have become slaves, religious men godless, and warm-hearted brothers bitter enemies; and how cupidity sullies the garment of the soul. That is what the comparison would show. Every one knows that who scans with open eyes the crust of the earth and the vault of the heavens, without any comparison. Did not these men live before you made them happy? They lived by faith in the Gospel of Christ; peasants of plain ways and severe morals, knitting their own clothes and baking their own bread. They did not then need, because it so pleased Moloch, or Leviathan, or some other power of hell, to fight the Spaniard or the Philippine, to-morrow, perhaps, the Japanese, or strew the coast with their mangled bodies, or

tumble in the foam. It is cool for a man to boast of paying tribute from the proceeds of stolen goods. Let him refrain from boasting, in the hearing of God, of the happiness he has created."

"Which of us is nearer to boasting I leave to a higher judge. I never ventured to liken myself to Him, or ventured only to approach His throne. I have never set myself up as saviour, or sought to make men dissatisfied with the jargon which the wisdom of two thousand years offered them, to deaden their pain, to benumb or to stimulate them. You, holy man, imagine that none before you has recognised the faults of State and Church and every other institution founded on force. It would be easy to name dozens. But as they knew nothing better, and could not write a recipe which should contain a swifter and surer remedy for misery, they let the tradition run on and left it to God to loosen, and eventually remove, the bandages from the eyes of His children. These men I call truly pious and humble; they would not be wiser than the God who made them. Did He not create me also? Did He not make me what I am? Yet might He have kneaded the clay in some other fashion. He wished my being as it is, then, and found a use for it in His creation. In order to produce evil? Then were He an evil God: a God of spite. No, but to put some one forward who was fitted for the struggle against hostile forces: even for the struggle against nature, from which the strength and wit of man must wrest, piece by piece, the kingdom of the earth. You are welcome to your peasant of plain ways and severe

morals ; if you cannot see how the *mujik* lives in his old faith, and how it is the particular vices of his life, not the priest or the tilling of the soil, that please him, you must be blind. I leave you also the glory of denouncing war ; the cheapest laurel ever yet gilded on the orator's brow (with real metal, which the naphtha-wells brought to light). When the day comes on which a people brought up without military spirit, accustomed to emasculation, pays for its folly, you will receive just punishment for the most mischievous of agitations since the days of eunuchs ; and the eunuchs at least closed against themselves the springs of pleasure, while the levity of the heralds of peace gathers its harvest of praise and reward with ease. But your towering pride cannot shake my consciousness that I have engendered happiness and led onward the little army my will could reach. That can be questioned only by the hallucinated who denies that we have advanced beyond the stage of the cave-man. So art, science, and civilisation are an illusion ? Have created the beautiful and the strong, in which the senses exult, and sin, and made the earth a kingdom of pale weaklings ? For that end God did His six days' work ? May the devil, in whom you must believe, enjoy your home-spun clothes and home-made bread. We were ripe for other joys. That pestilence should no longer stalk amongst us as it once did, that the mortality of child-bearing mothers is reduced by nearly a hundred-fold of its proportion, that we take our place at last in the whole and need no longer envy the bird its pinions, that we can,

with a spark controlled by the human will and sent far into space, save the crew and passengers of a sinking ship—these and innumerable others are the wonderful achievements of reason. How do your men live? In a joyless world of dull creatures, resembling the animals (all that makes the man, the finest and the strongest, is denied them), not daring to aspire beyond the sheer necessities of existence, only groaning a little less when they have a roof over their heads and some rye-bread or barley-brew in the oven. Brothers! Yet in your herd also the wolf falls on the lamb, the fox takes toll of the stupidity of the sheep. So they lived a hundred, two hundred, years ago: it was little different under the yoke of the Tartars. What does it avail them that the holy man sleeps, and eats, and drinks no better than they, talks peasant language with them, carries water to the house, ploughs the land, mows the field, fills and empties his body in the stubble, mends his clothes and shoes at the open window? The simplest boor could do that. They expected something more of the master. Is it of any use to them that he affects to forget what he has learned and lived? That he is wonderful, the most remarkable sight of the province? It would be, if reverence and curiosity brought money with them when they draw near! But the travellers are content to pay their coachman, and the master says that any man who goes beyond the minimum of existence is in peril of his soul. In San Francisco and Tula, Paris and Mukden, Sicily and Alaska, there is to be no other standard of life than that set up at the Sea of

Tiberius and on the threshing-floor of the Baptist. The law that was preached there is the inimitable law of all time, for every day and every station of life."

"It is from God, Mr. Nimbletongue. He does not give his laws for three months, as you give your bills; and he was thus free to take no account of thieves, robbers, slayers of men, and slave-drivers."

"Yet did not exclude them from His world; are not those whom you hold such found in large numbers? Like the pike in the carp-pond. His all-seeing eye perceived that the man of the tropics, whose food grows, does not advance, and has too many features of Cain's ape-wife, the ancient and evil-smelling woman. The brood of his sixth day must go onward: neither die out nor return to the beasts.

"Therefore, it must long for more than falls or flies into its mouth, and must be spurred and whipped to higher achievement: with the whip of the desire of power and the spur of need. The smile of Buddha does not discompose me. The nature and number of our needs increase; even this circumstance, which seems to you so vicious, may have been included in the providence of God. That is the belief in which thieves, robbers, slayers of men, and slave-drivers live and work. Do not put out of sight the relation of each to the Lord of Heaven, which He above can regulate as He thinks fit. Rather urge people, with the hope of greater enjoyment, to do greater things. 'And you will take

the lion's share of the result.' Right. But not, as the dishonest rogue would, for ourselves; for the greater security and wider development of production. From your hesitating rationalism—a bastard that curses its mother, reason—we expect no more than from the dreams of millenniaries and communists. We believe in a God Who made nature subordinate to man, and would wring from the muscles and nerves of man whatever the reluctant stuff can give. Not always with gentleness and sobriety: yet the sum of intelligence increases and is distributed. Where we have husbanded, organised, and gathered the profit, the world of men looks otherwise than it did.

“My people live more than men did in the days of sheep-minding and ploughing. There is more mentality and more joy of the senses. They must obey, of course; otherwise, instead of the unity of the implement, which serves all, we should have a heap of useless fragments. But they are slaves! Each is a master in a small way: free to make or dissolve contracts, far from the brutal stupidity which, on some day of intoxication or world-redeeming madness, makes your people fire the pit. And because I have done this, enriched my country, done service to millions, helped whole races to the light, and led thousands to the lofty sources of culture, I, a sinner stained with all the vices of industrious creative work, set my life-achievement higher than that of a fruitlessly holy man. The chatter of the streets would put me in the pillory and you in heaven. You have made yourself comfortable in a peasant's smock

and skin-boots. Mankind would have more : would attain without Rockefellers what those callous folk have taught it to desire. Away with them ! The anti-clerical calendar-saint, under a glass bell, does assuredly not slacken the march."

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